

THE *Nation*

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 162

NEW YORK • SATURDAY • JANUARY 5, 1946

NUMBER 1

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Published weekly and copyright, 1946, in the U. S. A. by The Nation Associates, Inc., 20 Vesey St., New York 7, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Washington Editorial Bureau: 818 Kellogg Building.

The Shape of Things

THE NEW YEAR'S GIFT OF BIG-THREE UNITY WAS almost more than a shattered world had believed possible. Yet without it the first meeting of the United Nations Organization next week would have had little meaning. The focus of world attention on Moscow tended to obscure the important achievements of the Preparatory Commission of the UNO in London. As a matter of fact, the broad area of agreement gained by the delegates there on matters of procedure and organization presaged the more fundamental unity on matters of policy. In the two important issues yet to be decided the margin of decision was narrowed. The key post of secretary general has to be filled, and several candidates from among the middle powers of Europe and the New World have been suggested. After studying the list *The Nation* has come to the conclusion that Canada's ambassador to Washington, Lester B. (Mike) Pearson, carries the best credentials. He has served his country with distinction in many important posts and in several United Nations bodies has displayed rare administrative ability, conciliatory patience, and resilient humor. In the matter of the site for the United Nations Organization, *The Nation* frankly favors Hyde Park. Nothing could be more fitting than that the new organization for world peace should select the birthplace and home of the man most responsible for its inception. For Hyde Park has taken on symbolic significance not only for the great mass of the American people but for the peace-seeking peoples of the world.

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DEFYING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, public opinion, common sense, precedent, and logic, General Motors has refused to cooperate with the Fact-Finding Board investigating the strike of its employees which began some five weeks ago. Its justification is that any discussion of ability to pay—a factor the board had ruled relevant to the issue—would mean surrender of managerial responsibility. More than that, the corporation's attorney claimed, the automobile workers' union, by insisting on tying its wage demands to questions of prices and profits, was making a broad attack on American free enterprise as an institution. These arguments have a ring as familiar as it is hollow, and Walter Reuther did well to recall how frequently they have been used in the past to resist the right to organize trade unions. For in this dispute the right of collective bargaining is again at stake. In a statement issued on December 29 General Motors declared: "All business questions are inter-related. Costs, prices, wages, profits, schedules, investments

must be *the responsibility of management*" (our italics). In other words, it admits the relevance of prices and profits to wages but insists that it is up to the management alone to decide what wages it is right and proper to pay. Granted this premise, any kind of arbitration procedure must be futile, and every labor dispute must become a trial of sheer economic strength. This is not a position likely to prove acceptable to the public, which, however disturbed it may be by the frequency of strikes, is not disposed to back corporation claims to act as judges in their own cause. We are glad, therefore, that the Fact-Finding Board in the General Motors case is carrying on its examination of all relevant material, including whatever financial data it can obtain. In no other way could it perform the task assigned to it, and General Motors' sulky refusal to recognize this fact puts the corporation out of court in a double sense.

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DEVALUATION OF THE FRANC HAS LONG BEEN inevitable. The exchange rates of 50 francs to the dollar and 200 to the pound sterling which have ruled since the liberation were fixed low with the intention of discouraging purchases in an almost empty market by American and British soldiers. Moreover, as long as France had little to export and was forced to buy heavily from abroad, the advantages of an overvalued currency were greater than its disadvantages. But if, in terms of relative purchasing power, the franc exchange rates were unrealistic at the time of the liberation, they were still more so before devaluation was decided upon by the French government. The wholesale price index now stands at 460 against 280 a year ago and 100 in 1939, while retail prices have risen even more steeply. The new rate of about 119 francs to the dollar compares with the pre-war rate of between 37 and 38 francs. But while there was a rough equivalence in 1939 between the purchasing power of 37 francs and that of a dollar, 119 francs certainly has less command over goods than today's dollar. This raises the question of whether the devaluation has been sufficiently drastic. If the new rate is to stick—and as a signatory of the Bretton Woods agreement France is restricted in making further alterations in its exchange rates—strong deflationary measures will be necessary. This was recognized by General de Gaulle, who, urging the National Constituent

Assembly to vote for the law revaluing the Bank of France's gold reserves, said: "To make this operation effective we must export. To regain a balanced budget, we must renounce new expenditures and not suppress any receipts; and, over and above all, we must produce." France is beginning to show signs of economic recovery, but there, as in England and other countries which unlike the United States have suffered a loss in real wealth during the war, austerity must for long be the order of the day.

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THE VATICAN'S MARCH ON THE AMERICAS IS proceeding according to plan. The Catholic church has scored impressive gains in its effort to recoup its European losses in the Western Hemisphere. In Mexico the clerical wave "has swept away thirty-five years of state atheism," and the church is now campaigning vigorously for the election of Ezequiel Padilla as President. In Argentina the entire hierarchy, with the single exception of Monsignor de Andrea, is supporting the candidacy of Perón. And the failure of Cuba to sever relations with Franco Spain has been largely attributed to the influence of the Archbishop of Havana. But the United States still remains the major objective. Five United States bishops have just been elevated to the cardinalate, and the total of North and South American cardinals increased from three to fourteen. The next step may well be the naming of Cardinal Spellman as Papal Secretary of State, an appointment that has been "in the wind" for several months. It is always gratifying to have an American of distinction honored abroad. Unfortunately the political motives that would dictate this choice must temper our enthusiasm. The clerical offensive in this country coincides with reactionary attacks from within, and every move by Rome should be scrutinized with unusual care.

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THE PROFITEER IN ANY LINE IS NOT AN attractive character, but the profiteer who exploits the needs of the disabled cuts a peculiarly ugly figure. The Association of Limb Manufacturers, forty-five corporations and thirty-four individuals, were recently indicted by a federal grand jury for conspiracy to fix "high, artificial, unreasonable, and non-competitive prices" for artificial limbs. This group, according to the indictment, makes 75 per cent of the limbs and 90 per cent of the parts and accessories used in the artificial-limb business—which is a nice business amounting to \$10,000,000 annually. As a result of the alleged conspiracy to fix prices, said Attorney General Clark, war veterans are forced to pay high and non-competitive prices when they buy direct from manufacturers, and the Veterans' Administration is not permitted to make artificial legs and arms. The Veterans' Administration, as well as state agencies, are forced to pay non-competitive prices; charitable institutions are prevented from making limbs for indigent persons free of charge; and the development and improvement of artificial limbs are impeded. In *The Nation* of March 10 Edward Maisel discussed at length the industry's sabotage of improved mechanical appliances, and we have reason to think that this article played a part in bringing about the indictment. We hope the case will be vigorously prosecuted to the

Atomic Bomb Supplement

We have on hand a limited number of 24-page supplements containing the addresses delivered at the recent Annual Nation Associates Forum.

The price per copy is 10 cents. A lower rate on larger quantities is offered to schools, organizations and special groups.

THE *Nation*

Twenty Vesey Street

New York 7, N. Y.

end that the disabled veterans of the war—and we have in mind the casualties of the production line as well as of the battle front—may have the best possible artificial limbs at little or no cost. That is the least we can offer them.

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WE HAD HOPED THAT ONE OF THE FRUITS OF peace would be greater cultural interchange between the nations, but James C. Petrillo, president of the American Federation of Musicians, seems to have other ideas. During the war, he explains in a letter to the radio companies, the federation waived its objections to network broadcasts of radio programs, including music from foreign stations, with a view to promoting "good-will and good relations with other countries." But now the war is over Mr. Petrillo believes that "we should get back to normal as rapidly as possible," and he therefore requests the immediate discontinuance of such programs. We don't suppose Mr. Petrillo means there is no further need for good relations with other countries, though his words imply just that. He is concerned only with protecting his members from all possible forms of competition. But like other protectionists he is likely to create a lot of ill will and to invoke retaliation. Among the most important American exports are films, many of them musicals. Suppose the Musicians' Union in Britain—a very powerful body too—placed a ban on the showing of any American films using music on the ground that this importation of foreign labor via the sound-track was taking jobs from their members. In that case, we suggest, American musicians would stand to lose far more than they can gain from barring a few foreign broadcasts. Apart from all calculations of profit and loss, any attempt to create a national cultural monopoly sets a deplorable precedent. As members of the writing profession we ourselves have to meet far more "foreign competition" than do the musicians. We not only welcome it but would fight to the bitter end any attempt to bar it.

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WE ARE A LITTLE TORN IN OUR RESPONSE TO the news that Ezra Pound has been adjudged insane and unfit to stand trial on the charge of treason for having made pro-Fascist broadcasts from Italy. Not being bloodthirsty, we can't regret that Ezra is not to be hanged—after all he really isn't in a class with Göring. On the other hand, it seems to us an unwarranted slur on the poet to maintain that he is less responsible for his actions than other men—and we can't help begrudging to various and sundry philistines the satisfaction of having one of the most famous of modern poets declared insane. Reading of Pound's defense—"he insists that his broadcasts were not treasonable; that all of his radio activities stemmed from a self-appointed mission to 'save the constitution'"—we are reminded of a lot of non-poets in the United States who have gone almost as far as Pound because they too were concerned to "save the constitution" but have confined their broadcasts to their own elegant living-rooms or to the columns of certain well-known newspapers. Our own private theory is that Pound's unquestionably treasonable activities had little to do with his character either as a political man or a poet. We have always suspected that one of his self-appointed missions was to find the cultural antithesis of

Idaho. He chose Italy—and it is altogether possible that he really believed that Mussolini was the inheritor of the Caesars and would restore the grandeur that was Rome. Which, again, seems to us no more wacky an argument for admiring Mussolini than the one put forward by all sorts of respectable people who couldn't write a line of poetry to save their lives—we mean the one about making the trains run on time.

The Congressional Record

THE SEVENTY-NINTH Congress concluded its first session on December 21 feeling thoroughly satisfied with its labors in the past year. "We have a right to be proud of ourselves," said Speaker Rayburn, while Senator Taft declared: "We are fairly well pleased with the record made by the session both in what was and what was not passed by Congress." Contact with constituents during the vacation will, we hope, deflate this complacency. Despite some rather feverish indications of prosperity, the mood of the country is anxious and its morale low. People are worrying about homes, about job security, about the cost of living, about racial discrimination, not to mention such shadows on the future as the atomic bomb. They are hoping for reduced tension at home and abroad, seeking stability both on the home and the international front and they would like to see greater evidence of active cooperation toward these ends between the executive and legislative arms of the government than has been apparent in recent months.

If Congress measures these aspirations against its achievements, humility rather than self-congratulation should be the keynote at its reassembly on January 14. Indeed it might do worse than open the session with the confessional prayer: "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done." This would serve as a reminder that while it spent a great deal of time in the last year harrying the OPA and bickering over Pearl Harbor, its unfinished business includes a great mass of important social legislation.

We do not suggest, however, that the record of the past session has been wholly negative. On international affairs Congress made a fairly impressive score. It voted the United States into the United Nations Organization by an overwhelming majority; it ratified the Bretton Woods agreement; it renewed the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, giving the Administration increased scope for negotiating the reduction of trade barriers. Finally, at the eleventh hour, after an unpleasant display of chauvinism, Congress authorized urgently required appropriations for UNRRA.

But if Congress proved commendably responsive to Administration leadership in the international field, it failed miserably to carry out the President's domestic program. On September 6, when Congress hastily reconvened after V-J Day, Mr. Truman urged swift action on a series of measures designed to ease the human strains of the reconversion period, pointing out that Congress had already made provision to assist business in the transition by voting tax rebates.

Among other things, he asked for more adequate assistance for the unemployed, with maximum compensation payments of \$25 for a period of twenty-six weeks, as well as the extension and strengthening of the United States Employment Service. With a view of securing a firm basis for the economy, he advocated passage of minimum-wage legislation, enactment of the Murray-Wagner Full Employment bill, creation of a Federal Research Agency, and a long-range public-works program including authorization of new regional developments on TVA lines. He also requested the creation of a permanent FEPC and a national health program for which detailed specifications were given in a later message.

The President proposed a very heavy agenda for Congress, and it would have been unreasonable to expect its completion within a few months. Nevertheless the country can rightly complain about the marked lack of progress. The one enterprise on which Congress embarked after September with celerity and enthusiasm was the reduction of taxes. In this matter it went well beyond Treasury recommendations, particularly in the relief given to corporations. On the other hand, we find the Kilgore bill for increasing unemployment compensation stalled by the House Ways and Means Committee after being passed by the Senate in a diluted form. The record on the Full Employment bill is still worse. After the Senate had emasculated it, the House Expenditures Committee slaughtered it and proceeded to write a new measure which does not even pretend to aim at full employment. Minimum-wage legislation is also bogged down, while the bill for a permanent FEPC, although favorably reported by the House Labor Committee, has been blocked by the reactionary Southern Democrats who control the Rules Committee.

There is no point in going over the whole barren record. Typical of the recent attitude of Congress was its action on the United States Employment Service. Not only did it ignore Mr. Truman's request for more money for this bureau, but it sought to turn the service back to the states by the devious method of attaching a rider to a bill disposing of unused war appropriations. The sharply worded message in which the President vetoed this measure, condemning both the attempt to destroy the USES and the manner in which it was done, is a sign that relations between the White House and Capitol Hill are approaching a crisis. When he succeeded to office, Mr. Truman wooed Congress in the most flattering terms, but his cosy intimacies with the Old Guard have failed to bring results. On October 30, broadcasting on wage and price policies, he changed his tactics and administered a spanking to dilatory legislators. But while this attempted discipline produced a yelp from Capitol Hill, it did not effect any noticeable improvement in conduct. So far Mr. Truman has been unable to make his influence felt or to establish a position of leadership. Roosevelt often made Congress furious, but usually it attended to his wishes. If his successor provokes less rage, he also commands less attention.

Whether Mr. Truman has it in him to overcome present Congressional indifference to his recommendations remains to be seen. The veto message previously mentioned suggested

an increased vigor, and now we are promised a broadcast address on January 3 which will review the whole legislative program. It has been reported that in this speech the President will tell "the inside story" of his troubles with Congress and will emphasize the work it has left undone. We can only hope he will not pull his punches. In putting his case to the people Mr. Truman is adopting the one strategy by which he can gain his ends. May he rise to the occasion and succeed in combining clarity in exposition with appeal to the public imagination—the combination that won Mr. Roosevelt so many victories.

A Unified Defense Policy

WHEN Congress reconvenes, one of its first tasks will be to achieve a final decision in the long controversy over the merging of the armed services. It will not be an easy decision to reach. Seldom has a question of public policy aroused such bitterness. What should be strictly a technical question has been allowed to degenerate into a dogfight between the brass hats of the army and the gold braid of the navy. Obviously the issue cannot be settled satisfactorily unless Congress can ignore these service rivalries and concentrate on the essential problem of organizing our national defense to meet (1) the special requirements created by such weapons as long range rockets and atomic bombs, and (2) our new responsibilities under the United Nations Charter.

President Truman has presented the case for unification so effectively that there is not very much we can add. With the character of warfare changing rapidly and drastically, we can no longer rely on the kind of coordination that sufficed in World War II. A unified system of national defense is essential for integrated strategic planning. A single supply and procurement agency would save the country many hundreds of millions of dollars by eliminating duplication in effort, unnecessary stockpiling, and wasteful bidding of one service against another for scarce materials. And a single Department of Defense should bring better teamwork within the government wherever defense policies must be coordinated with the activities of other departments.

But unification, as the President well realizes, will not automatically provide the kind of defense coordination which everyone wants. Cooperation cannot be assured by a monolithic organizational chart. It is dependent on elusive psychological factors, and cannot be achieved where there is a feeling of injustice or resentment. Nor can it thrive in an atmosphere of bureaucracy. For example, the Japanese, failed miserably in their efforts to attain effective teamwork in amphibious operations even though they had a highly centralized organizational blueprint. Our Army and Navy, on the other hand, worked fairly successfully together in the Pacific despite a dual command. If we are to have better teamwork in the future, particularly at the strategic levels, it is important that the navy and air forces be satisfied that they will not be swallowed by a dominant army bureaucracy. At first sight it might seem that this problem is met by Mr. Truman's proposal to set up semi-autonomous branches

within the Department of Defense for Army, Navy, and Air. Actually, the problem is considerably more complex than it appears on the surface. In many instances the navy specialists are outranked by their counterparts in the army, and the navy is probably justified in fearing that an amalgamation may weaken essential navy operations. Care must be taken, in merging duplicating services, such as intelligence and supply, to safeguard the navy's special interests. To this extent, public opinion will undoubtedly back the House and Senate Naval Affairs Committees in insisting on revision of Mr. Truman's unification plan, which in its present form predominately reflects the army point of view.

It is to be hoped also that Congress will take advantage of the needed reorganization of our national-defense structure to strengthen civilian influence within the armed forces. Mr. Truman has declared that unification will facilitate civilian control by simplifying the structure. But critics of the unification plan fear that an amalgamation of the services will strengthen military influence in Congress and in the civilian departments of the governments. The truth probably is that unification will have very little direct effect either way. The divergence between the military and civilian points of view on vital public issues will in all likelihood remain as long as the services are organized on a fundamentally non-democratic basis. Perhaps it is impossible to have a completely democratic army and navy: military discipline is in itself essentially undemocratic. But every effort should be made to keep the armed services an integral part of American life and tradition. To this end the morale and educational phases of army and navy training should be kept under direct civilian control. Supply, scientific, and technical activities should be freed from exclusive domination by the brass hats. And ways should be worked out to enable competent young men without West Point or Annapolis training to rise to high positions as readily as if they had attended the service schools. At this point the military and democratic objectives merge. For anything that can be done to rid the new unified service of domination by a bureaucracy of the élite will not only make it a more suitable instrument of democratic policy but will enhance its military efficiency.

Reunion in Moscow

BY FRED A. KIRCHWEY

THE agreement reached at Moscow gave us less than we wanted and more than we expected. Modest as its accomplishments seem in the light of what must be done to create a society relatively safe from suicide, they were essential to that larger aim. For the foreign secretaries of the three biggest powers reassembled the underpinning without which the United Nations Organization could not stand and the meeting of the Assembly this month could provide only a meaningless stage-play. This is not an insignificant achievement. The tragedy is that seven months after the end of the war and the conference at San Francisco, the foundation alliance should have come so close to falling apart.

It is to be hoped that this minimum of agreement will

not be too strongly assailed by groups or nations whose interests have not been fully consulted. Chief among these is France. One can understand the resentment with which the Quai d'Orsay views a plan to write the peace terms for Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary without French advice. Although France was not at war with those states, its predominant influence before the war, particularly in Rumania and Hungary, would have indicated a primary share in the settlement. And France is no better pleased with its exclusion from discussion of the Far East and, above all, of atomic control. China, whose role as a "big" power is still nominal and will be until its civil struggle is settled, may question certain points in the agreement—the four-power control of Korea, for example—but it is not likely to do more than grumble. France can cause trouble. But its best friends must hope that expediency will prevail over pride, for in this case expediency represents the price of further international cooperation. France has every right to give notice that it will fight for the sort of settlement it wants; as a member both of the Security Council and the full Council of Foreign Ministers it will have plenty of opportunity to do so. To oppose or delay the application of the Moscow agreement would be politically irresponsible.

The fact is, every nation might as well accept Big Three dominance as the basis of post-war relations. Constant obstruction or outright hostility are useless—purely nihilistic devices. We need agreement between Russia and the West; the job of UNO is to build upon that agreement a democratic structure. While the monopoly of power vested in the Security Council makes the job a tough one, it won't be rendered easier by attacks upon the all-too-fragile understandings that hold the major nations together.

The firm hold of that monopoly was demonstrated in the Foreign Ministers' recommendation that the UNO Assembly establish an atomic-control commission which will report—as far as atomic weapons are concerned—directly to the Security Council. The commission will be made up of one representative from each nation on the Council and will deal with the problems outlined in the original Truman-Attlee-King proposal: the exchange of basic scientific information, the outlawing of atomic bombs and other means of mass destruction, and the creation of international safeguards, including inspection. But the veto rule puts the entire attempt to control atomic weapons at the mercy of any single great power. The United States, as an immediate example, would be able to say no if the commission ordered inspection of existing plants equipped to make bombs or products related to the making of bombs. In other words, the effectiveness of the Moscow plan will be wholly dependent upon the goodwill of each major nation subjected to it—a dangerous arrangement however you look at it.

My conviction is that no secure international control can be established until the atomic commission is made respon-

Everybody's Business, a regular Nation feature is omitted this week. In the next issue Mr. Hutchison will discuss the reasons for the current scarcity in consumers goods.

sible to the UNO as a whole, for not until then will lesser nations regard the decisions of the commission as possessing any of the attributes of law. But this change cannot come immediately, and meanwhile I am aware of certain factors which reconcile me to delay. As long as fascist dictatorships like Argentina, in accord and in constant communication with Spain's fascist regime and with Nazi elements in and out of their own territories, remain members of the UNO, I am willing to postpone full United Nations control of the most dangerous power ever made available to man.

The decision at Moscow on the administration of Japan was moderate and sensible. The machinery for joint control sounds complicated, but it avoids the pitfalls of geographical division and allows MacArthur ample latitude for independent action under broad directives. Given honest intentions, the plan ought to work. If it does it may provide a yardstick for the use of occupation authorities in Europe. This agreement and the ones covering China and Korea are discussed more fully on another page.

The "compromise" on the Balkan issue was in fact a surrender, embellished by certain face-saving clauses. It was a

necessary surrender. As this journal has often pointed out, the Western powers can never succeed in naturalizing their own political methods in areas subjected to a tough process of social change under conditions of famine and economic collapse. Nor can they exorcise by diplomatic maneuvers the fact of Russian influence. The best they can do is to accept the basic situation and, in concert with Russia, bring about some modification of revolutionary control. This has been accomplished through the Moscow agreement; it could have been done months ago without provoking ill-will or entailing defeat. Now, perhaps, we can get ahead with the establishment of normal relations; peace can at last be made and the occupation armies withdrawn.

Much anxiety has resulted from the failure of the conference to reach a decision on Iran or on other Near East problems. Nor was anything said about Spain, which clamors for action. Since these matters require Big Three agreement before they can be submitted to the UNO or otherwise disposed of, their postponement is disturbing; but it is not as dangerous as a new deadlock would be. The Foreign Ministers could not afford a repetition of the London fiasco.

These Men Block Housing

BY NATHAN STRAUS

(Administrator of the United States Housing Authority from 1937 to 1942;
now president of Radio Station WMCA)

A RECENT statement of mine that the housing shortage had been deliberately planned by reactionary real-estate interests has been violently contradicted. However, there is ample evidence that the real-estate interests have consistently opposed all new housing which could offer competition with their ancient and insanitary slums. Present conditions were foreseen by many persons two years ago, and the need for action was urged at that time in my book, "The Seven Myths of Housing." Those who, during the war years, obstructed legislation to prepare for a low-rent housing program at the war's end bear a large share of the blame for the shortage today. Who are they?

THE REAL-ESTATE INTERESTS

Skyscraper Management, organ of the National Association of Building Owners and Managers, printed the following item in March, 1941, under the heading, Manhattan Has No Need for New Housing:

A jump in the percentage of vacant old-law tenement dwelling units in Manhattan during 1940, following a substantial increase of such vacancies during 1939, is revealed through the third successive annual survey of eleven typical old-law tenement areas just completed by the Real Estate Board of New York, which shows an average vacancy of 8.6 per cent at the end of January, 1941, as against an average of 7.1 per cent for the same time in 1940, and 6.1 per cent for 1939. Jones W. Mersereau, executive vice-president of the board, in an open letter sent to all members of the legislature from New York County, pointed out that the increased vacancy per-

centage, "substantiating as it does the high percentage of vacant dwelling units in Manhattan shown by the 1940 census report, proves, if proof were needed, the absence of any probability of a local housing emergency."

On November 13, 1942, according to the New York *World-Telegram*, James Felt, specialist in old-law tenements, who usually speaks for the organized real-estate interests, said: "Vacancies in old-law tenements continue to rise. Unheated buildings and those without toilets are suffering most." Attributing the "suffering" to the buildings rather than to the unfortunate tenants is itself significant.

The real-estate boards, the apartment-house-owners' associations, the building-and-loan groups have conducted a campaign to discredit public housing. A hundred examples of their methods could be quoted, but the following typical statements will suffice. The *Confidential Weekly Letter* of the National Association of Real Estate Boards said on December 26, 1939: "USHA public-housing projects now under way are undiluted socialism. . . . Opinion is growing that any plan of operation which puts housing and building permanently into private hands is preferable to the present program of local and federal ownership of housing projects." On January 27, 1943, Rufus S. Lusk, Washington representative of the National Home Builders' Association, as quoted by the New York *Times*, told a conference of the association, "Public housing is 'nothing but socialism.'"

To ask us to believe that this barrage on many fronts, this constant repetition of the same misstatements, was not the

result of a deliberate campaign, is to ask us to stretch our credulity to the breaking-point.

The lobby of the National Home Builders' Association is powerfully abetted by that of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, represented by Herbert U. Nelson, and that of the United States Savings and Loans League, represented by Morton Bodfish. The activities of all three are directed to blocking any legislation which would provide good low-rent housing and thereby interfere with the fat profits gained by keeping unsanitary slum shacks and dark slum rookeries crowded with tenants. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Bodfish maintain close personal contacts with key members of the Congressional committees and seem to have almost unlimited funds at their disposal for printing, arranging conventions, and entertaining lavishly.

THE LINE-UP IN CONGRESS

The cause of better housing has strong champions in Congress. Senators Wagner of New York, Ellender of Louisiana, Taft of Ohio, and Pepper of Florida are leaders of the fight in the upper house. In the lower house Majority Leader McCormack of Massachusetts, Representative Brent Spence (D) of Kentucky, chairman of the Banking and Currency Committee, which considers housing legislation, Representative Estes Kefauver (D) of Tennessee, and others have consistently battled for legislation to wipe out slums and provide adequate housing at rents that a family of moderate means can afford to pay.

Aligned against such legislation are a number of Congressmen united not by party ties but by pocket-book interests. Representative Albert Gore (D) of Tennessee is perhaps the ablest of the group. He is an influential member of the Committee on Banking and Currency, where he has been spokesman for the point of view of the slum landlords. Gore is rightly credited with having been chiefly responsible for killing public housing. After failing to smother in committee a bill providing for additional funds for the program, he made his fight on the floor of the House. The speech he delivered on August 3, 1939, when the bill came up for final passage, has always seemed to me to be an outstanding example of the extremes to which men will go in garbling facts and misquoting figures to protect the interests of those they serve. Representative Gore had the satisfaction of bringing about the defeat of the bill in a close vote. In the six years since then he has been equally successful in preventing all legislation to provide decent housing for returning veterans.

The point of view of the reactionary real-estate interests was represented on the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, which handled all war-housing legislation, by the chairman, Fritz Lanham (D) of Texas. The notorious Section IV of the Lanham act of 1941 provided that war housing should not be designed or ever used after the war to provide good housing for American families. It read as follows: "... said housing or any part thereof shall not, unless specifically authorized by Congress, be conveyed to any public or private agency organized for slum clearance or to provide subsidized housing for persons of low income."

Lest it be thought that I am misrepresenting what the Congressman had in mind in writing this section of his act,



Courtesy the Federal Art Project

Drawing by Saul

it may be well to quote his own words. In a speech before the United States Savings and Loans League, as reported in the *Washington Star* of November 28, 1942, Mr. Lanham said:

The federal government doesn't belong permanently in the housing business, except in very rare instances. You can't find anything in the Constitution that says the government has to build houses for the citizens. . . .

The real-estate business naturally and properly belongs to the real-estate men. . . .

There is nothing in it [the Lanham act] to do with slum clearance or low-cost housing for low-income groups.

Should any bill to provide decent housing for those who live in the slums be enacted into law, the real-estate interests have other means to block the program. The Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives allots money to the various government agencies to carry on their work. In practice, subcommittees of this large committee hear the applications. On the subcommittee which considers and acts upon requests from the housing agencies the slum landlords have two watch-dogs. The function of Wigglesworth (R) of Massachusetts seems to be not only to lend respectability to the cause of the slum owners but to make certain that, if any low-rent housing bill does pass, the government agency charged with carrying out the program shall be harassed by lack of funds for administrative and technical personnel. Wigglesworth's coworker on the committee is Taber (R) of New York. The hatchet man of the so-called "economy bloc," Taber works quietly behind the scenes and seems to have mysterious connections with reactionary and isolationist groups.

These are the men who have successfully led the fight to kill low-cost housing and to bring about the shortage of homes by which slum owners are profiteering today.

SIDESTEPPING THE ISSUE

New evidence of the power of the reactionary real-estate interests was provided recently when the federal government adopted a so-called emergency-housing program which is a betrayal of the veterans even less excusable than the lack of action during the war years. We read in the papers

of the appointment of "expeditors" and of government regulations granting priorities to "homes costing less than \$10,000." Such action is mere shadow-boxing, a pretense of doing something while carefully sidestepping the real issue. A family must have an income of about \$5,000 a year to be able to afford a \$10,000 home. How many returning veterans have that income?

The need today is for at least two million new dwellings for families with earnings of from \$20 to \$50 a week. Such families can afford to pay from \$20 to \$50 a month in rent. Only public housing can provide healthful, livable homes within their means. History and arithmetic alike confirm this fact.

The United States Housing Act, tested in the courts and proved in use, is an instrument at hand for this purpose. Under the leadership of the United States Housing Authority, local housing authorities in the years 1938 to 1941 built more than 170,000 homes which set new records in excellence of design and economy of construction. President Truman, then a United States Senator heading a committee charged with investigating federal-government agencies, said on October 29, 1941: "There is absolutely nothing to criticize in the United States Housing Authority. It is a highly competent organization working through local authorities."

WHAT CONGRESS SHOULD DO

Congress should immediately enact legislation to authorize the United States Housing Authority to make loans to local authorities sufficient to build two million new homes. Probably less than 10 per cent of the loan funds will be used, since experience proves that local housing authorities can obtain money more cheaply by the sale of their bonds to private and institutional investors—but the loan funds should be available if needed.

The sum of \$100,000,000 should be provided by Congress for annual subsidies so that rents in the new housing built may be adjusted by local authorities to fit the family incomes of the veterans most in need of housing. The subsidy required will range from about \$100 a year to zero. It will probably average about \$50 per annum per family.

Congress should appropriate \$200,000,000 immediately for grants to communities for the purchase of housing sites. The appropriation should include a provision by which any unexpended balance will lapse on June 30, 1946. This will insure prompt action by the localities.

There should be a further provision that no part of this land-purchase fund may be used to acquire sites which cost more than \$2 a square foot in communities of more than 100,000 population, or \$1 a square foot in smaller communities. Unless this provision is included, the real-estate boards will exert pressure upon local governments to take their decaying and obsolete properties off their hands—under the guise of "slum clearance." The federal grant is not to be for buying slums but for buying tracts of land on which new, livable, low-rent homes will be built. The limitation suggested will confine purchases largely to vacant land, and thus no families will be dispossessed from housing which they now occupy. Moreover, the effect of building on vacant land will be to decentralize urban populations. This process, called in England "decongestion of the central mass," is one

of the cardinal principles of a sound housing program.

The federal government should grant an absolute priority to local housing authorities for both labor and materials to get the two million dwellings built as quickly as possible. Because of a temporary shortage of critical materials, it may be wise to prohibit all private residential construction for the first six months of this year. All available material and labor would thereby be channeled into the construction of homes for those whose need is greatest. Announcement of such a policy would signalize in an appropriate way an about-face by our government and a new determination to act swiftly and decisively. Of course, the public housing would be built, as in the past, by private contractors employing building labor at prevailing wages.

The amendments to the United States Housing Act outlined above could be written on one sheet of paper. If enacted into law during the month of January, most of the vacant land required could be bought and available for the erection of housing by April 1. By fall several hundred thousand new, livable, low-rent homes could be ready for occupancy.

I believe that those who treat the problem of the homeless veteran lightly are gravely endangering the country. I believe that they do not appreciate how men feel who discover that while they were risking their lives to protect us, we were doing nothing to protect them and their families. Millions of ex-service men are bitterly resentful that we have provided no place for them to live but a miserable slum dwelling.

The government appropriated the funds to build weapons for a victorious war. The veterans expect their government to provide the funds to build them homes for lives of peace.

Far Eastern Impact

BY ANDREW ROTH

(Author of "Dilemma in Japan")

THE RESULTS of the Moscow conference have spread consternation among those elements in Tokyo, Seoul, and Chungking whose hope for survival was based on the deepening of hostility between the United States and Russia. But people elsewhere who yearn for a lasting peace and democratic progress have been able to derive considerable satisfaction from the decisions concerning the Far East taken by the Big Three. While there's many a slip 'twixt the communiqué and its realization, these decisions have narrowed the Soviet-American rift and enhanced the possibility of developing popular regimes in Japan, Korea, and China without destructive civil wars. Northeastern Asia is the touchstone of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union because it is the only area in the world where the two countries have comparatively equal political, economic, and military interests. Any development that cements Soviet-American accord in that region will contribute to peaceful international relations throughout the world.

Despite the indignation of the MacArthur sect in this country and the wailing of Japanese conservatives, the transition to a four-power supervisory Allied Council in Tokyo

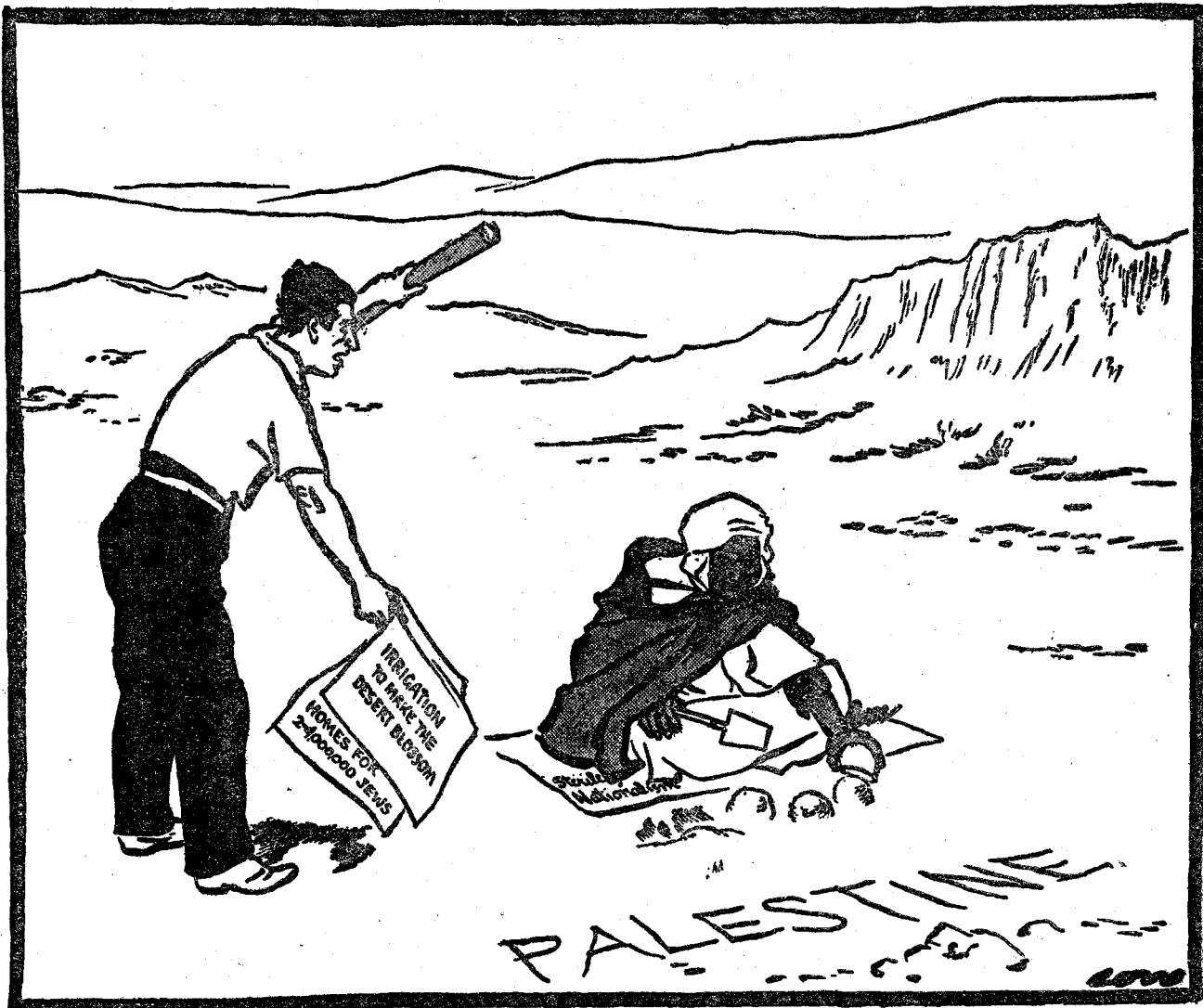
with MacArthur as permanent chairman and chief executive is likely to be fairly smooth. China, Britain, and Australia have already indicated substantial agreement with American policies in Japan. And the liberal Washington-born policy directives which MacArthur has been carrying out—and for which he has been getting the lion's share of the credit—are not very far from Russian ideas on how to eliminate the sources of Japanese aggression. There will be no dispute about the necessity of ridding Japan of its semi-feudal land system, the monopolistic hold of the giant *Zaibatsu* trusts, the jingoist *Tenno* (emperor-worship) system, and the considerable number of war criminals.

The Russians may differ with us on the speed of Japan's political and economic delousing and on the best methods for achieving the objectives already blocked out. They may criticize us for tolerating the Shidehara government's sabotage of the Potsdam terms and American directives. They may object to our generosity to big business during the reconversion period at a time when millions of Japanese are living in the direst poverty. They are likely to recommend extending the war-criminals list on the basis of their long and very thorough investigation into Japanese military-fascist organizations and their superior opportunities for observation during the period of their neutrality, when they could

watch Japanese events from the inside. But these are differences in emphasis rather than in approach.

In Korea, however, there is a yawning gap to be bridged. As a result of poor and inadequate State Department preparation, Korean policy bears the heavy imprint of military expediency and conservatism. American occupation officers were informed that one of their major objectives was to build southern Korea into a "bulkward against communism," and they have frequently acted as if this were their chief or virtually their only purpose. They have reviled and harassed the leftist People's Republic movement which grew out of the Korean underground and embraced extreme conservatives who derived their wealth from collaborating with the Japanese in the spoliation of their own people. The American military commander, Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, has supported the old Korean Russophobe, Syngman Rhee, and crowded the airfields adjoining the Russian-held sector with war planes.

The Moscow agreement calls for the early establishment of a democratic provisional government sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union and indorsed by China and the United Kingdom. But the achievement of unity and democracy in Korea will require understanding and skill plus a strong desire on the part of the occupying administra-



HE PREFERS SAND-CASTLES

tion. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the American delegates to the preliminary conference in Korea scheduled for next week will not only read the words but breathe of the spirit of the Big Three communiqué.

The agreement on China hardly goes beyond recognizing "the need for a unified and democratic China." The crux of the present dispute is that the Communists will not give up their arms until they have democratic guaranties, while the Kuomintang promises it will give China democracy after

the Communists have submitted. Few impartial and informed observers believe that the reactionaries in control of the Kuomintang—conscious of their unpopularity—will submit willingly to democratic processes. Consequently if that democracy which must be the foundation stone of unity is to be attained, international pressure will have to be exerted to edge the extreme reactionaries out of their control of the Kuomintang. Success here will help to remove the greatest remaining danger spot in international relations.

Letter from Rome

BY ALBERTO MORAVIA

(Mr. Moravia is a well-known Italian novelist and journalist. He is a cousin of the anti-Fascist Carlo Rosselli, who was murdered on Mussolini's order two years before the war.)

Rome, December 1

FOREIGN visitors to Rome frequently remark that the city seems more prosperous and less dismal than other European capitals. But foreigners, one must realize, do not come in contact with the middle and lower classes, which suffered the most from the war. And, then, Rome, with its unclouded blue skies, its fountains, gardens, and monuments, has always given the impression of serenity, even, perhaps, of opulence. The Romans know, however, that sunshine and fountains, gardens and monuments don't increase the amount of food they are able to get by one gram, or the wages of workers by one cent.

The aristocracy and the rich bourgeoisie have kept their old palaces or their hill-top villas, and in them American and English travelers meet charming ladies and distinguished men who bemoan in good English the activities of the left-wing parties and sigh for the restoration of the monarchy. It was because of their exclusive association with this high society that English diplomats were convinced of the monarchy's popularity among the Italian people. Of course it was not so. Hostility to the monarchy is one of the few things about which Italians are practically unanimous. In the words of an old Italian proverb, the diplomats "went to the innkeeper to ask if the wine was good."

Perhaps more accurate information about conditions in Italy might be obtained from the English and American soldiers who stayed there for two years. They did not frequent palaces or meet the wives and daughters of big business men. Their knowledge of how the people lived and what they thought was gained by chance, in the streets or in public places. They might tell about the great number of prostitutes—very few of whom are professionals—the crowds of beggars, the misery and hopelessness they saw on every hand. Many of them became acquainted with Italian workers' or tradesmen's families, and they found no prosperity or sighing for the return of the monarchy there. Unfortunately it is not soldiers who report to governments or big newspapers; but journalists and diplomats.

At present the problem that occupies the mind of the laborer and white-collar worker in Rome—both these classes are large there, especially the second—is the terrific disparity

between wages and the cost of living. I have been in America, and I believe that if such a disparity existed in the United States, laborers and white-collar workers would be so depressed by the utter absurdity and hopelessness of the situation that they would be almost incapable of going on. Italians, however, continue to work.

The American public should know under what conditions men work in Italy. Briefly, it's like this. With wages at their present level a white-collar or manual worker can provide for his needs up to the tenth or perhaps the twelfth of the month. After that he either starves to death or is obliged to "take measures"—*arrangiarsi* is the Italian word, borrowed from the French. I will speak later of what the word implies. First I want to cite some figures. With a salary that ranges around 300 lire a day—for a white-collar worker it is often as low as 200 lire—a married man with two children in Rome has to spend more than 600 lire a day for food. Buying other essentials, such as shoes or clothing, is of course out of the question. To *arrangiarsi* is the only solution. Some refuse to try, and live on green vegetables and a little bread. For the others two roads are open—to sell their belongings, if they still possess any, or to engage in some business outside their daily work.

The sale of belongings is carried on all over. The first things to go are the superfluous things, the best dishes, the few pieces of jewelry—not wedding rings, those Mussolini took at the time of the Ethiopian war—articles purchased in times of prosperity, such as gramophones, ice-boxes, dancing shoes, radios, poker chips. After the superfluous things have disappeared, the furniture goes—the parlor sets, since company is no longer received; the dining-room furniture, since one can always eat in the kitchen; and finally beds and mattresses.

The other course, to engage in some outside business, means in general to operate on the black market—unless one of the illicit trades, like prostitution, is practiced. Today the black market means the normal market, for the supplies furnished by government authorities or by the Allies are too few to be worth speaking about. The black market trades chiefly in foodstuffs, but enormous amounts of money are also made in medicines, clothing, and luxuries. A phial of penicillin

costs 12,000 lire, a man's suit 30,000 lire, a pack of Camels 250 lire, and the price of an automobile trip to Milan is 10,000 lire. Of course to do business on the black market one must be willing to take chances, have a knack for trading, and be unhampered by the fetish of respectability. Concierges in particular, with their opportunities for getting acquainted in both the upper and lower strata of society, have shown themselves to be clever operators. As a result of this general practice an entire group of the poorest people has become well-off or even in some cases rich, while inflation and the cost of living are rapidly forcing the middle classes down the few steps that still separate them from complete indigence.

This impoverishment of the petty bourgeoisie merits a more detailed examination than can be given it in a brief letter. It should be remembered that this class is politically and socially the most powerful one in Italy—the workers are less numerous and the peasants are inarticulate—and that the future of the country depends on its moods and desires. For example, fascism was probably supported by the big industrialists and landowners and opposed by the workers and farm laborers; it was the petty bourgeoisie that furnished the men, the style, the ideas, and the sentiments. Every political party in Italy knows that to succeed it must win the favor of the petty bourgeoisie. Curiously enough, however, nearly all the parties try to appeal to the workers, and in consequence the middle classes have maintained a rather neutral attitude toward politics. None of the parties really satisfy their requirements.

These requirements can be deduced from the very character of the middle classes. They are, first of all, patriotic. They are formalistic in social relations, cherishing academic titles, honorific distinctions, respectability and decorum, and clinging to their inherited prejudices. On the other hand, Italian culture is in their hands, not in those of the high bourgeoisie or the nobility. From this class come the teachers, journalists, writers, politicians, doctors, lawyers, judges, and engineers. The petty bourgeoisie are faithful to tradition, even to the recent and regretted traditions installed by fascism. But while they are conservative in whatever concerns the social and cultural order, their frustrated, unhappy, and explosive vitality makes them also, in a certain sense, revolutionary. Without question they are the most ambitious and the most discontented class. They don't want to sink back into the masses, and they cannot, as they might perhaps like to do, climb up to the upper classes.

During the German occupation the petty bourgeoisie eagerly awaited the arrival of the Allies and in politics were strongly inclined toward the left-wing parties. An election held soon after the Allies arrived would certainly have shown a great swing to the Socialists and Communists. But subsequently this sympathy declined. Too much was expected of the new democratic governments, which were rendered impotent by material conditions and, it must be said, by the inexperience of the new bureaucracy. Middle-class Italians have little imagination and cannot realize that their present sufferings are not due to the parties in power today but to the Fascists, who unleashed the war. They know only that under fascism they managed to eat, to clothe themselves, take vacations, marry off their daughters, and send their sons to college and that now all these things are impossible or possible

only in a very reduced degree. In addition, fascism seemed to have a strong foreign policy. Most people do not understand that Italy's present inferior role in world affairs is due to fascism and not to the democratic parties. The Trieste question has been the cause of much bitterness, and the Communist Party lost many of its petty-bourgeois members because it did not support Italian claims energetically enough. This does not mean that the middle classes are leaning to the right or actually desire the return of fascism. It only means that present conditions are not to their liking, and that a political formula corresponding to their interests has not been found.

One might think that with the Italian middle class in such a depressed condition, intellectual and cultural life would also be on the down grade. But that is not the case. On the contrary, an extraordinary boom in journalistic and publishing enterprises has taken place, owing in part to a natural reaction to fascism's twenty-year-long suppression of free expression and in part to the desire to exploit this reaction. Not all the newspaper editors and publishers seeking to profit from the situation are well qualified for their profession, and at least for the time being the phenomenal growth of book-selling and journalism is a matter of quantity rather than quality.

Under fascism Rome had about ten newspapers; today it has almost double that number. There are the party papers—the Liberal *Risorgimento Liberale*, the Communist *Unità*, the Socialist *Avanti*, the Action Party's *Italia Libera*, the Christian Democrats' *Il Popolo* and *Il Quotidiano*, the Republican *Voce Repubblicana*, and the Labor Democrats' *Democrazia del Lavoro*; the independent papers—*Il Tempo*, *Il Giornale del Mattino*, *Il Momento*, *Libera Stampa*, *L'Indipendente*, *La Capitale*, and *L'Epoca*; the old *Osservatore Romano*, an English and an American daily, and finally the financial and sport papers. Political, literary, and popular magazines are not less numerous, and there are humorous papers and other ephemera. All these publications are printed and sold almost exclusively in Rome. Northern Italy has its own newspapers and periodicals.

Tendencies noted in the press may give a fairly accurate idea of the changing mood of the people. In the first days of the liberation the party papers had a very high circulation; today this is much lower. *L'Avanti* has dropped from 120,000 copies to 20,000, *Il Risorgimento Liberale* from 60,000 to 30,000. *L'Italia Nuova*, the organ of the monarchists, has a fixed circulation among the nobility and the rich bourgeoisie, but its sale too has fallen off. On the other hand, the circulation of the independent papers, which do not carry on party politics, has greatly increased. The *Voce Repubblicana* is an exception among the party papers, which proves, if proof be needed, the popularity of republican and anti-monarchical ideas in Italy. In general, the success of the independent press as compared to the party press is due to two factors—the large amount of space devoted to news, features, entertainment, and crime; and the middle classes' waning interest in party politics. The negative attitude of some groups toward the parties has become so pronounced that the more pessimistic members are calling it fascist.

The publishing business was formerly centered in Milan, with branches in Florence, Turin, and Bari. But in the past

year nearly a hundred publishing firms have sprung up in Rome. Like the newspapers, they may be merely another sign of the current reaction, which may or may not last. The publishers have gone overboard on translations from the English and French, and it often happens that a foreign book is published by two different firms at the same time. Chief among the English and American authors published are those that were prohibited by fascism—Hemingway, Lawrence, Caldwell, and the like. The books are carefully printed, sometimes even elegantly, but the translations often leave a good deal to be desired. The high cost of paper does not permit

books to be sold for less than 200 to 300 lire, and the book-sellers are already beginning to notice a falling-off in demand.

I don't think it is hard to understand the political and moral apathy of the present moment. It is the apathy of a people who put forth an enormous effort, only to perceive that it was a mistaken effort which must be paid for with even more superhuman efforts. Small wonder that while accepting this destiny Italians feel now a pervading anxiety which prevents them from being greatly concerned about anything except the material means of living.

Cynicism Wins in Italy

BY DONALD DOWNES

(Correspondent for The Nation and the Overseas News Agency in Italy)

Rome, December 15

IN RETURNING his mandate of power to the six parties of the Committee of National Liberation the retiring Prime Minister, Ferruccio Parri, made two stinging accusations against the political leaders who had brought about the fall of the government and, by inference, against the Italian people. The first drew a deadly parallel between the years leading up to fascism, with their useless political flounderings and bickerings, and the situation today. The second pointed out that the capricious actions of politicians, jockeying for power at the outset of probably the coldest, hungriest, and most critical winter in Italy's history, must demonstrate to the rest of the world how feeble and disunited was Italy's vaunted union of anti-Fascist movements.

To an American it is shocking that the Italian political parties and most of their leaders, at a moment when millions of citizens may be unable to obtain a minimum of bread and clothing and shelter, can regard national issues almost exclusively from the point of view of party success or of an individual's rise to power. Something of the same selfishness, it is true, was shown by certain American industrialists and at least one American labor leader when President Roosevelt was undertaking to mobilize the American economy for war, but in America public opinion was strongly behind the government, and opposition was easily overridden. Tragically for 45,000,000 Italians, they seem unable to muster public indignation or even public concern.

Why are they so apathetic? I think because for generations before the rise of fascism politics was a game for aristocrats, reserved to them as a class more competent than the people to make decisions for the nation. There is nothing in Italy's history between the Risorgimento and Mussolini to indicate that democracy was ever more than a word. The people, like the politicians, were left or right, socialist or liberal or reactionary, as one might belong to one club or another, seldom from any deep conviction. Men did not try to carry out political theories. They were content to be ideologically this or that and forget the application of their ideas.

Fascism added dishonesty and cynicism to incapacity and superficiality. For twenty-two years the Fascists talked social-

ism and reform, perhaps did a little good work here and there, but all the while they were plundering the country and catering to the worst elements in Italian society and the worst shortcomings in Italian character. As a result the professional governing classes became morally and politically bankrupt. The democratic spirit survived only in the white-collar workers, the northern peasants, and a section of the industrial workers.

The professional politicians, from Communist agitators to aristocratic monarchists and liberals, look on the people as something to be used, to be directed, to be bought and sold in Roman political deals much as the ancient Romans bought and sold their slaves. No one fears the people or their indignation; no one believes that the worm will turn. So confident of this are the new breed of Fascists that Guglielmo Gianini has named his movement, the very cornerstone of which is contempt for the people and privilege for the few, "L'Uomo qualunque," the Man in the Street.

This cynicism is expressed in many ways. No politician has thought it important to discuss before the people in detail the vital decisions which Italy must take in the Constitutional Convention to be held early in the spring. No one asks the people: Shall the new government have an elected executive or one responsible to a parliament? Shall there be a supreme court to guard the new constitution? Shall there be one or two houses of parliament? Shall the code of laws be changed? Shall judges be elected or appointed? Shall the parliament control the army? Shall there be "referendum and recall"? Shall there be a greater or less degree of local autonomy? Shall the jury system be introduced? What social security shall be constitutionally guaranteed? Shall the church be constitutionally forbidden to mix in Italian politics? Shall a socializing tax system like England's and America's be written into the constitution? Shall a series of regional legislatures be created? Shall education be made a state monopoly? What degree of nationalization of industry and finance shall be included in the constitution?

"Shall we have a king or a republic?" is about as far as the Italians have gone in public debate. They seem to think that a decision on the one issue, monarchy versus republic,

would settle everything, when of course it would settle nothing. For if any lesson can be learned from the history of the struggle for democracy, it is that political democracy without social and economic democracy is a useless toy. This truth has not yet been discovered in Italy.

Even the labor unions, through which popular opinion should be able to dictate to politicians, are the creatures of the various parties; each party has its own preserve in the labor field.

Nor do the press and radio express the people's feelings. The press, composed in general of party-controlled papers, reflects even in its news columns a narrow party view. The so-called independent papers, such as the *Giornale del Mattino* of Rome, when examined closely, turn out to be serving a party. And this service often goes as far as the suppression of news. In short, most newspapers are political pamphlets filled with the polemics of one small group, understood only by the party leaders, and unread by the average man or woman.

The radio has perhaps even less influence, since its technique is so primitive and the number of functioning sets is so small that comparatively few persons actually listen. Reception is poor, and the news programs are a bore. The different parties are given short periods of time to present their points of view. So far as I have been able to find out, no party has tried to dress up or dramatize its program. What one gets is a sort of rehash of the political essays which one carefully skipped in the morning papers in the vain search for solid information.

With the public so uninformed and apathetic, except for regimented party demonstrations, the politicians can govern Italy with little reference to popular demands. Most of them are naturally uninterested in building up a public opinion which would control governmental policy. A few men in the Socialist Party, some in the Action Party, and a handful of

Christian Democrats have tried to alter this situation. A vastly larger group in all the party leaderships resent any interference by the people. Certainly one of the basic reasons for the fall of the Parri government was its encouragement of the rank and file. Cynicism toward the little fellow, contempt for the "ignorant masses" mark those who are coming into the saddle in Italy. The old-time politicians and ex-Fascists, the royalists and landowners, the greedy industrialists and big financiers, who believe that they are chosen to hand down "democracy" to the people, are pretty close to being in power. Such a grouping is a fair definition of fascism.

There was a moment after Salerno and the fall of Naples, and another after the north was liberated last spring, when Italy was temporarily awake. And those were the times that the Allies chose to back wealth and privilege and royalty and old-time discredited politicians. Allied officials have always favored "the good old reliable and established people" as against the forces of reform. The Allied administration has always made exceptions for the automobiles of the rich and the houses of the aristocrats, has allowed the former to be licensed and the latter to be spared requisition. Fascist sympathy and Fascist profits have never been a liability under the Allied administration; to be a leftist has been to be suspect, to be discriminated against.

In this climate of opinion a purge of Fascists has become impossible; even preference for non-Fascists is often futile. The ex-Fascists and the three pre-Fascist Prime Ministers—Bonomi, Orlando, and Nitti—egged on by Allied officials and such visitors as Amadeo Giannini of California (who in a press conference at Naples said plainly that until Italy had a rightist government of the three pre-Fascist old men it could expect no help from America), have made their alliances with the monarchist nobility and the leaders of industry, and are trying to take over Italy. If they succeed there may be civil war in Italy.

What Will Your Dollar Buy in 1946?

BY ALFRED FRIENDLY

(Staff reporter for the Washington Post covering labor and economic subjects)

SHORTLY after World War I the proprietor of a small men's-wear shop in Kansas City stocked his shelves with high-cost goods which he had bought during the roaring inflation. Before he could sell his wares, deflation hit with a vengeance; the storekeeper went broke, and it was years before he could pay off his debts.

The OPA, trying to prevent a repetition of the inflation-deflation pattern after World War II, wonders how lasting an impression that experience made on the Middle Western haberdasher who today is President of the United States. Though an economic situation is developing which is infinitely more dangerous than that of the early '20's, the agency is getting little really effective support. Mr. Truman has uttered the right words, but the OPA must have something more if it is to survive. Chester Bowles is putting up a gallant fight, but he needs solid help from the White House.

The seriousness of the danger ahead is hard to describe in sufficiently impressive terms. Unfortunately, the OPA has itself wasted much valuable verbal ammunition; "catastrophic," "terrifying," "paralyzing," and even "atomically devastating" have been expended on situations of less gravity than the one the nation now faces. The facts, however, speak for themselves.

Inflation, of course, is the natural result of an abundance of buying power combined with a scarcity of things to be bought. As for our buying power: Individual savings have increased during the war years by \$145 billion, an amount far above the 1939 national income. Bank deposits have risen from \$27 billion to \$72 billion. This is for the most part "hot" money. Even since the end of the war money paid out in wages and profits has remained about as high as 1944, or almost double the 1929 figure. Unemployment has been

about one-third less than was anticipated. Consumer spending has been maintained at the highest level in history. All this is excellent news, except for its effect on the problem of preventing inflation. As for the scarcities: Simple arithmetic shows that it will be impossible to satisfy the demand for houses—the demand backed by real money—for the next ten years. The demand for automobiles will not be met for two or three years. Acute shortages in the textile industry for many months are foreseen as the result of man-power difficulties. It will probably be half a year before consumers' smaller durable goods, such as radios, refrigerators, washing machines, irons, and the like, are produced in the volume necessary to fill the need. Inventories of all goods are at record low levels. Only food seems to be in reasonably abundant future supply, and even here there are problems. For example, the OPA removed the price controls on cocoanuts some weeks ago as an experiment, and within a month the price quadrupled. When citrus fruits were freed from controls just as the crop was coming in, prices went up from 50 to 100 per cent in a few days, although they are coming down again now. There was no scarcity; the dealers simply found that the traffic would bear the higher charges.

The facts, it is clear, are bad enough. In addition, in recent weeks there has been a bumper crop of rumors to the effect that price controls are about to be removed, either generally or on specific items. These rumors spur the alarmed public to hurry up and spend its hot money before prices sail up into the blue. If such a trend really gets under way, then of course controls will come off; no power on earth could hold the lid on prices against fifty or seventy-five million rich and frightened buyers running amok in an almost barren market.

With the prospects so menacing, why do not Bowles and the OPA enjoy the full support of the people, the Congress, and the Administration? Why should there be any fight over the maintenance of price controls? The answer is that while the majority of the people are solidly behind Bowles, a tremendously powerful minority made up of various pressure groups have got the ear of Congress and seem to have the entrée to the White House. (Some three hundred Congressmen turned out at a committee hearing a month ago at which the National Automobile Dealers' Association appeared to protest against the proposal to make them absorb the higher car costs.)

Opposing Bowles are the National Association of Manufacturers; most of the industrial and commercial trade associations, in particular the National Retail Dry Goods Association and the National Association of Real Estate Boards; and several labor leaders who learned their economics at good old Neanderthal U. The case of the N. A. M. was handled, and beautifully handled, by Bowles himself in a speech before that organization on December 6. It is perfectly obvious, although he did not mention it, that the N. A. M. is fighting not merely for the removal of price ceilings—which would enable its members to make a temporary killing—but to be rid of all government controls.

The wrath of the National Retail Dry Goods Association stems from the OPA policy of forcing retailers and wholesalers to absorb part of the war-time cost increases. In the

beginning the OPA insisted that these be absorbed by the manufacturers, who were benefiting from the greater volume of production. Later it made some of the middlemen and sellers, who were also enjoying the huge volume increase, bear part of the burden. Their profits for the war years scarcely suggest that they are ruined men—the department and specialty stores' profits before taxes in 1944 were 1,100 to 1,200 per cent above pre-war levels. And the association's recent exhibit in Congress of the horrible consequences of OPA regulations proved largely phony. Although it refused three times to give the names, Bowles was able to run down seven or eight of the two hundred cases it cited. In some instances he found clear OPA price violations; in others he found the manufacturers who were said to have been forced out of business by the OPA still happily producing. Yet industry and middlemen are busy trying to put across the proposition that without higher prices they have no incentive to produce or sell.

The National Association of Real Estate Boards fights the OPA on a clean-cut issue. Realtors and builders make more money selling a high-priced than a low-priced house. And regardless of costs, they want to sell houses for as much as they can get—which at present is plenty, since there are not enough building materials or facilities to make even a small dent in the gigantic housing demand. The association won its fight to remove Limitation Order 41, the OPA's only control, Congress having forbidden actual price limits on houses. Order L-41 gave priorities to builders of houses costing less than \$8,000, and therefore during the war and immediately afterward these were almost the only ones built. When the order was lifted, houses originally built to sell for \$8,000 jumped instantly to \$10,000 or even higher. The N. A. R. E. B. seems hell-bent on pricing itself out of a market and thus destroying the one industry on which are based our hopes for prosperity in the next few years.

Some labor leaders frankly admit to OPA officials that when their union needs a wage increase they mean to get it—if they have to help the employer get a higher price for his product. John L. Lewis has come out for such action, possibly because he is trying to endear himself to industry as the labor champion of "free enterprise."

The mass of consumers are supporting Bowles for obvious reasons. For a time, annoyed by rationing, they underestimated the OPA's anti-inflation work, but when rationing was discontinued, when the housewife saw not the "fourteen points" for a pound of beef but the "54 cents," the real problem was recognized. Even small business men whisper to OPA officials after a speech or meeting, "We can't speak out loud because of the association, but we're for you; keep it up." And support is growing among farmers, who realize that with food becoming abundant, high prices for their products are a thing of the past, whereas they are likely to be the fall guys in industry's price-raising plans.

However large the pro-OPA forces may be, they are not strong enough at the moment to force the extension of rent and price controls after June 30, 1946, when the present authorization for the agency expires. If the OPA is not to be wiped out when it is most needed, the Administration will have to act. Bowles received his first real aid from the White House a month ago when the President set up a housing

priorities plan and indorsed the Patman bill for housing price controls. This was in effect an admission of error in lifting L-41 and a roundabout way of restoring some of its provisions. But one swallow does not make a summer, and the Administration has yet to espouse and really work for the economically sound theory which Bowles expounds with re-

spect to the OPA's continued existence. When the consumer, he says, stops screaming to keep price controls on and the seller stops screaming to take them off, that will be the sign that products are abundant and are being disposed of in a freely competitive market. At that point, but not before, price controls will no longer be necessary.

A Man Around Fifty

BY MARTIN GUMPERT

(A New York physician, author of the recently published book "Hahnemann, the Adventurous Career of a Medical Rebel" and of "Berlin: a Necrology," which appeared in The Nation of May 12, 1945)

BEING a man around fifty, a physician, a writer, a father, an American, a Jew of German extraction, gives one a rather definite if somewhat bewildered concept of life. The best approach to existence will always be a descriptive, not to say an autobiographical, one. A well-conceived case history is the basis for diagnosis, and diagnosis is the basis for treatment—if there is any hope in treatment.

I, or rather we—since mine is a typical case—we are the opposite of a lost generation. We seem to be somehow permanent, indestructible, with roots spreading everywhere like a prolific weed, adaptable to almost every climate, professional survivors. Owing to some mysterious faculty for resistance we have conquered an assortment of the most violent germs that ever invaded the human organism. Death has eliminated the less vital breeds of our generation, but we, the remaining few, have developed a strange and completely undeserved immunity to the continuous uproar around us. Time and again I have tried to become an active participant in current events, to be a soldier, to assume responsibilities, to do something dangerous. By a chain of ridiculous interferences I have always been prevented. I have been rejected, excluded, for no visible reason; if everything else seemed to be all right, the State Department, at the last minute, would deny me a visa. On the other hand, things always happened most opportunely, and without any particular effort on my part, if I had to be saved or protected. There would be friends to help me, chances to grasp; a mysterious series of events would come to my aid.

As I say, all these things have happened to me as a typical member of a small group. We were apparently too unimportant to be destroyed by our enemies and sufficiently useful or well-liked for our friends not to let us perish. Our rescue seems to be due to a general contempt of, and affection for, intellectuals. We are in a sense the playboys of history: it may be amusing or even profitable to have us around as long as we do not attempt to mix into serious business.

Having survived two world wars under very different external circumstances—once as an adolescent and a citizen of defeated Germany, once as an adult and a citizen of victorious America—I have a horrifying awareness of the identity of the two disasters. As one grows older, pleasure and pride in survival increase, but a painful sense of frustration and despair also develops. We have not been tor-

tured, we have not been starved, we have not been soiled by indignities. We still enjoy all the delightful small pleasures of being alive, are still full of curiosity, and our knowledge and experience add up to some degree of wisdom. But at the same time it has been our lonely and unenviable function to witness bestiality and mass murder, the slaughter of the innocent, the extinction of laughter, beauty, and nobility, the exploitation and deception of the poor, the growth of madness, disease, and hunger—a mythical and unbelievable explosion of unhappiness, blood, and tears. The most disgusting and cynical show has been performed before our eyes, but we keep our places in the safe darkness of the spectators' seats: graying, wiser, less hopeful, more tired, and always aware of the emergency exit.

If we look at our children, we see the same touching, confused, and helpless urge to do better, the same treacherous doctrines promising salvation, the same age-old ideals leading straight into havoc. Hardly recovered from the tremendous sacrifices of warfare, we seem headed for greater and probably ultimate disaster. There must be some reason why we were spared to live through two catastrophes of mankind, and to observe in guilty comfort the physical slaughter and moral decline of our society. There must be some reason why, in a wave of blood and crime, our individual health has been improving, our life span expanding, our knowledge miraculously enlarging. And there must be some reason why at the end of this holocaust a new power emerges which a stunned world tries to understand.

In Germany the complete servitude of the men of knowledge to the scoundrels of action became the essence of doom. But all over the world knowledge and power were—and still are—completely severed. Wars and revolutions, cyclic depressions, mass movements, and political crises are but the secondary symptoms of a new fact or a new truth, born in some quiet laboratory, conceived by some creative brain, and transformed into forceful aggressions as inescapable as the will of God. The state of this earth depends entirely on our understanding of the structure and process of life, and no human activity, no justice, no freedom, no faith, no happiness can be maintained without such understanding. The misfortunes of our generation have been caused by the tyranny of ignorance at a time when the management of mankind required profound knowledge.

Here we are, men around fifty, born in the twilight of

the nineteenth century, spoiled by a childhood filled with the illusion of progress and lasting peace, awakened from our sleepy pleasures by the firebrand of World War I, living through the "no more war" era, many of us without work, thrown around like rubbish, chased by gangsters into the fatal adventure of a second world war, surviving on into another chaos, and still intrusting our fate to the command of people who know nothing and have learned nothing. Have we been spared to witness the gruesome finale, to be passengers up to the last stop of civilization's glorious journey, or are we to be the aged agitators for a better and wiser way of life?

In our unhappiness, the power to destroy ourselves has often seemed the only symbol of our individual freedom. Who of our generation can say that he has never contemplated suicide? The thought of this last refuge has, indeed, again and again encouraged us to remain alive; and whoever chooses life instead of voluntary death becomes a witness to the goodness and the value of existence.

We have now reached the point where this godly power of self-destruction is at the disposal of our whole human species. This overwhelming gift requires a new structure of life on earth, new nerves, new philosophies, new patterns of social behavior. We are desperately looking to see who of our leaders are aware of this gigantic revolution. The only hopeful sign is the courageous and wise solidarity of those scientists who have helped to unchain the atomic force for potential happiness or potential tragedy.

It is fortunate that the scientists of today, in this country, are willing and eager to take political action. America, which came into existence after the Dark Ages, has always shown an almost religious respect for human inventiveness. It has been maligned for its technological enthusiasm, but it has discovered and proclaimed the power and joy of engines, skyscrapers, planes, electricity, of cleanliness and health, of harnessed energy and cheap production and distribution of goods. America needs leadership which is equal to our present standards of scientific knowledge and progress. Perhaps it needs us, the veterans of lifelong defeat, to apply the wisdom we have so hardly won to the problem of linking knowledge and direction—to the creation, in short, of that new structure of society upon which human survival depends.

Next

Halsey Sees Short Next War.—Newspaper headline.

The next war will, according to
The Admiral, be quickly through,
And may no more than be begun
Before it's either lost or won.
A single blast may well suffice
To do the job up, neat and nice.

So be it. Let the war be brief.
Less then the wearing, waiting grief.
If next war there must be, and next,
Men still benighted, still perplexed,
If there is, then, no other answer,
Let it be stroke instead of cancer.

RICHARD ARMOUR

Homage to Alvin Johnson

BY MAX LERNER

(Chief editorial writer of PM; author of "The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes" and "Public Journal")

ON MY select list of Americans of first-rate stature I cherish the name of Alvin Johnson. His retirement as head of the New School at the age of seventy-one is—if I know him at all—not the end of the line for him but a caesura from which one can measure the cadences that have gone before and that are to follow.

If T. S. Eliot is right—that "between the Idea and the Reality" in the lives of all of us there "falls the shadow"—Johnson is one of the few I know for whom that shadow is very thin. I first met him back in 1927, when I was just out of graduate school and he was gathering a staff for the newly projected "Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences." A whole galaxy of the scholarly societies had come together to dream up that project: there were big names aplenty, and resolutions, and prolegomena; all that they lacked was someone who knew enough about everything to edit an encyclopedia of *Allerleiwissenschaften* but didn't know too much about any one science to get stuck in it beyond extrication.

They found that man in Alvin Johnson, and he quickly set about making their dream a reality, imprisoning in fifteen big shiny yellow volumes the best that was being thought in the social sciences the world over. A group of us—about a dozen or more young sub-editors—worked with him day after day for five years. Johnson had the big bearlike capacity for taking a litter of cubs and licking them into shape as an editorial staff. He had a divining-rod judgment that told him what was true metal in a man, what dross or just shirt-stuffing. He knew everything and he carried his learning lightly. As a result, I don't suppose there has ever been an encyclopedia venture since Diderot's in the eighteenth century which generated more excitement among those involved, or which will prove a greater landmark in the history of ideas.

Johnson had landed in New York as a *New Republic* editor in 1917, after one of those fabulous migratory careers in which he had moved from college to college, a little like his teacher, Thorstein Veblen, a little like Matthew Arnold's "Scholar Gypsy." Of Danish stock, he had grown up on a Nebraska farm, written a thesis on rent theory at Columbia, and taught college economics all the way west from Bryn Mawr and Cornell to Chicago, Nebraska, Texas, and Stanford. But he had been restless in college teaching, and he was restless during his six-year spell as a liberal editor. At Texas he had been the sort of maverick professor who writes a novel called "The Professor and the Petticoat." In New York liberal circles it was curious to see this big, hulking Scandinavian farmer from Nebraska, who told caustic irreverent stories, and who preferred writing semi-fictional ironic sketches to finger-pointing editorials.

In 1923 he found his métier and his real life work, and he has stuck to it with massive tenacity ever since. The New School for Social Research had been started a few years earlier as a gesture of protest and freedom in the dreary wastes of academic tyranny. Some of the best minds of the

day were behind it—Veblen and Beard and Harvey Robinson. But it was Johnson who took over as director and gave the school a local habitation and a name in the American intellectual world. His mind now had an action to direct itself to—the establishment of a new educational idea in America, something like the Folk High School (*Folkehoiskole*) idea of another and earlier Dane, Bishop Grundtvig. Johnson had always needed a venture large enough to gather into its scope all his far-flung knowledge and interest, something in which his imagination could build itself a structure on the actual earth of people's striving. He found it at the New School, and he proved the truth of Emerson's remark that an institution is the lengthened shadow of a man.

To give the school a base Johnson showed an unsuspected and almost miraculous capacity to raise funds. He brought to bear the same gift for generating intellectual excitement that I had seen at the Encyclopedia, and he soon was performing the miracle of getting men of wealth to back a school where teacher and student alike were completely free.

But he also brought to the school a philosophy of education. It is basically instrumentalist, in the pattern of John Dewey. But I find more *sense of room* in Johnson's educational thinking than I do in most of the Deweyites—a more catholic interest in the arts and in the modernist aspects of creative work, a freer sense of the power of the idea to inflame the imagination. Adult education can be a dreary affair. But Johnson has made it anything but dreary at the New School. Johnson has clung to two ideas: that a man has not stopped learning after he has reached maturity and a life's job; and that the way to run a school is to pick scholars who care about action and men of action who have a bent for scholarship—and give them the run of the house.

But Johnson and the New School reached the peak of their greatness in the crisis of European scholarship under fascism. When Hitler made life in Germany and almost throughout Europe a Gehenna for free men, the great danger was not that Europe would lose some of the most creative minds and skills in history but that no other culture would find them. Johnson was quicker than anyone else I know to take the full measure of Europe's loss and America's opportunity. He quickly sent word throughout Germany and Europe that the anti-fascist scholars would be welcome here. He created for them at the New School a University in Exile, which has had and still has some of the best minds in social theory in the world. He organized the other university administrators into a committee that found places for other exiled scholars throughout the country. I count this the biggest single educational achievement of recent years, by the side of which most of the controversial storms raging now seem thin-spun stuff.

Johnson has turned his work at the New School over to Bryn J. Hovde, whom he describes as "a man after my own heart." Even for those who don't know Hovde's own merit, that ought to be enough. Johnson himself has mapped out a decade's work in the field of fighting race discrimination, and has already made a beginning as the real intellectual father of the Ives committee in New York State. That and, I hope, some more novels. For no man could have built an institution like the New School unless he had the gift of lyricism in him.

In the Wind

THIS OMINOUS ITEM is reprinted from the left-wing London *Tribune* of November 23: "Sir John Anderson has just returned from the atomic-bomb talks in Washington. Sir John Anderson has just been appointed to the board of Vickers."

SWISS NAVY NOTES: The International Federation of Trade Unions reports that Switzerland may shortly have its own merchant fleet of half a million tons.

EDWIN W. PAULEY, chief of the United States reparations mission to Japan, told a Los Angeles press conference that Japanese industrial equipment might be sent to China and the Philippines to help rebuild their economies. The neighborly way he put it, however, was: "Nobody in this country wants the inferior and second-hand machinery in Japan, which, however, will be welcomed in China and the Philippines."

HEADLINE in *Bread and Butter*, Consumers' Union weekly: "Shirts and Pajamas Rolled Back." In the middle of December, too.

THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION has its first house organ. The Woodrow Wilson Foundation, New York City, has started publication of *United Nations News*, a monthly "devoted exclusively to news . . . of the UNO, its functional agencies, and other international organizations."

CONGRESSIONAL AFTERTHOUGHT: The Associated Press reported that in rushing through a mass of legislation just before the Christmas holidays the Senate passed a resolution demanding an end to butter rationing—just a month after the OPA had already ended it.

LAST AUGUST an editorial in *The Nation* urged that the United States use the services of Herbert Norman, Far East expert of Canada's Department of External Affairs, in the military government of Japan. We took careful notice, therefore, of the announcement on December 26 that Herbert Norman had been named to represent Canada on the Far Eastern Commission.

PEACE ON EARTH: While workmen were erecting Cleveland's annual Christmas tree in the city's public square, another crew was busy setting up a forty-five-foot Nazi V-2 bomb just across the street. It turned out to be an advertisement for the coming National Aircraft Show.

JUSTICE KEILER MACKAY of the Ontario Supreme Court used the Atlantic Charter as grounds for a decision which ruled against Jim Crow housing regulations.

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. We will pay \$1 for each item accepted.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

The People's Front

JOSÉ GIRAL, Prime Minister of the Spanish Republican government in exile, passes through New York this week on his way to France. He has said that upon his arrival in Paris he will consult the various Republican leaders with a view to reorganizing and enlarging the present government. Some of my friends are inclined to doubt the sincerity of the Prime Minister's intentions; they suspect him of playing for time by some token reorganization. For my part, however, I believe Giral is honestly convinced that his government, as it is now constituted, is up a blind alley. Entirely lacking in militant leaders, it has awakened no spark of enthusiasm among Republicans inside Spain. Indeed, it has not even aroused any fears in Spanish fascist circles.

Internationally, too, the Giral Cabinet's prospects are far from bright. To date it has been recognized only by Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, and Venezuela—and Mexican recognition was assured even before Giral became Premier. Giral's friends had confidently expected that a "moderate" Cabinet excluding Negrín and the Communists would win quick recognition from Washington and London. To their dismay, that expectation did not materialize. Instead, as recent events indicate, the United States and Britain have edged in the opposite direction. In Washington on December 16 Under Secretary of State Acheson received Dr. Negrín, whom the *New York Times* described as "the first Republican caller since the fall of Madrid." Cabling from London a few days later, Herbert L. Matthews reported: "No government without Dr. Negrín and without the Communists can expect world-wide recognition." And from Paris came a statement by Foreign Minister Georges Bidault hinting politely but firmly that the French government is in no hurry to recognize a Spanish government not fully representative of all the Republican parties.

Prime Minister Giral has not made public the details of his plan, but my guess is that he will proceed as follows: (1) He will, of course, try to retain the premiership. (2) He will attempt to appoint as vice-presidents the four former prime ministers now in Europe: Portela Valladares, who, despite his seventy-eight years, defied the Gestapo with magnificent courage during the Nazi occupation of France and, though a rightist, suggested the appointment of Negrín as Prime Minister last August; Casares Quiroga, who held the premiership at the outbreak of the Spanish war; Largo Caballero; and Juan Negrín. (3) He will offer a Cabinet post to each of the groups that have remained outside the government—the Communists, the U. G. T., the Left Republicans, and a section of the C. N. T. In short, Giral now hopes to accomplish in France precisely what Negrín attempted in Mexico four months ago when he urged on President Martínez Barrio the creation of a strong representative government—an attempt frustrated by the old politicians.

Thus four valuable months have been wasted, and in that time confusion and disunity have risen again. The sharpest debate has developed around the proposal of a plebiscite;

this is not surprising, given a government whose Foreign Minister belongs to the group of Prieto, who claims the dubious honor of initiating that proposal. Ramón Gonzales Peña, veteran mine leader and chairman of the U. G. T. (Spanish equivalent of the C. I. O.), diagnosed the situation correctly last week when he said, "All that is happening now is the result of the makeshift solution of the August crisis." The split has been further aggravated by a message which Dolores Ibarruri, la Pasionaria, sent to Republican leaders on December 19. I have seen the original text of her cable; it is quite different from the version published in the press. Contrary to the reports, Pasionaria rejects the Prieto formula calling for a plebiscite conducted under foreign supervision. However, she would accept a plebiscite if carried out by "a provisional government representing all the enemies of Franco, from the Republicans, Socialists, Communists, and trade unions to those monarchists and army officers who are genuinely hostile to the dictator." I wish that Pasionaria had not talked about a plebiscite; even her qualified support has introduced an element of confusion into the debate.

In itself a plebiscite sounds wonderful, democracy at its best, but in the case of Spain it makes no sense. If a plebiscite were to be held before the republic was reestablished, with Franco's army and police in control and the Republicans deprived of access to the people, the thing would be a greater farce than the recent elections in Brazil. A plebiscite held, as Prieto now proposes, after Franco is overthrown would be even more absurd. The main argument for the plebiscite is that it will prevent violence; but the time to prevent violence is during the transition, not after. The only way to finish fascism in Spain with a minimum of disorder is to combine unity among the Republican forces, inside and outside Spain, with diplomatic action by the great powers.

Largo Caballero, too, has come out in favor of the plebiscite, and by so doing he has perhaps missed an opportunity of still rendering a great service to the republic. For if Giral should fail in France and objections to Negrín persist, Caballero would have been a logical choice for Premier. Negrín would certainly have been willing to enter a coalition Cabinet headed by the old union leader. But in view of Caballero's position on the plebiscite, that is out.

Today as before, without regard to any statements by Caballero or Pasionaria, the position of all the groups identified with the policy of Dr. Negrín remains unchanged. We are absolutely against the plebiscite. The Spanish people cast their votes for the republic in blood through three years of war and six years of unbroken resistance to the Franco regime; they will not accept the shameful compromise which the defeatists propose. Giral himself has declared his opposition and the opposition of his government to a plebiscite; but as long as representatives of Prieto are in the Cabinet, his position remains equivocal. A hard job awaits him in Paris.

DEL VAYO

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

The Piety of Evelyn Waugh

WHEN it was predicted that the war would give a new impetus to religion, it could also have been predicted, of course, that of all religions the Catholic would be bound to be most compelling, and especially to writers and other intellectuals, who like their emotions of faith to be as well-organized and traditional as possible. But by any traditional standard, it has surely been an odd kind of celebration that the Catholic church has been recently experiencing in certain quarters. There was the movie, "Going My Way," for instance, which gave us a church whose charms existed quite without benefit of sacrament. And now there is Evelyn Waugh's "Brideshead Revisited" (Little, Brown, \$2.50), a novel whose appeal to faith rests on the most familiar cynicisms of non-faith.

"Brideshead Revisited" is a more incoherent book than any summary can suggest. This is the story Mr. Waugh tells: During the war a company of soldiers, including a Captain Ryder, the narrator, is billeted in an English country place called Brideshead, the estate of the Marchmain family. Ryder had known the Marchmains intimately, and he recalls his long difficult relationship with the family—his love for Sebastian, the younger son, when they were together at Oxford; his first meeting with Sebastian's gallant sister, Julia; his early sympathy with Lady Marchmain and his later disaffection from her, as he discovers the pious tyranny she exerts over her family; then the long years in which Sebastian falls steadily into drunkenness, in which Julia makes a miserable marriage, and in which Ryder himself marries unhappily; finally, his reunion and love affair with Julia, which is terminated by Julia's sudden return to the church in which she was born and her recognition that her life has been a sinful one. The book ends with the strong indication that Ryder, agnostic during the extended period of this narrative, is himself now a convert to the faith of the Marchmains. Since there is nothing else to explain Ryder's religious regeneration, one is meant to understand it, I presume, as a revelation from his experience with this family.

But why an experience of the Marchmain family should turn one to, instead of away from, religion is the most immediate of the many questions raised by Mr. Waugh's new novel. For the main emphasis in Mr. Waugh's portrait of this Catholic household is a deep condemnation of Lady Marchmain for a piety which has wrecked her husband and her children. It is Lady Marchmain's unfeeling self-righteousness that is shown to have driven her husband into social ostracism on the Continent, her son Sebastian into his drunkenness, her daughter Julia to her despair, and even her older son, Bridey, to oafishness and her younger daughter, Cordelia, to a spinster's life of good works. Except perhaps in the case of Cordelia and in the case of Sebastian's beloved Catholic Nanny, "Brideshead Revisited" has scarcely a good word to say for any conventional professors of the Catholic faith. When they are not wicked, like Lady Marchmain, they

are silly, like Bridey and Bridey's wife. All our sympathies are enlisted for the upper-class bohemians and sinners of the novel, for Sebastian and Julia and old Lord Marchmain. Mr. Waugh's Catholicism, that is, demonstrates itself as a religion for well-placed reprobates, which may not constitute an absolute heterodoxy—I daresay that Mr. Waugh's conviction that Sebastian is a very holy man within his drunkenness represents a perfectly orthodox view of one possible road to salvation—but which surely constitutes a curious bias.

The disproportion between Mr. Waugh's affectation of non-belief and his protestation of belief is, in fact, the chief interest of "Brideshead Revisited." Although Mr. Waugh has and uses all the old sophisticated arguments against his church, he has nothing except the sudden will-to-faith and the inevitability of death—Julia's return to the fold coincides with that of her father, on his deathbed—to offer in its support. When, for example, Julia renounces her love because it is the sinful continuation of a life of sin, nothing in her action assures us that it is anything more than either masochistic or superstitious; religiously, it is no more meaningful than Iris March's running herself into a tree. By masquerading or burying its religious convictions in cynicism, "Brideshead Revisited" makes, indeed, so much better a case against conviction than for it that even to grant that its author's attitude is only a device requires the help of the biographical record, the knowledge that Mr. Waugh was himself converted to Catholicism some years ago. Not that this form of religious dissembling is without precedent: Aldous Huxley, for one, is a practiced hand at it. I find it none the less perverse and suspicious for being an established method of disputation.

Of course, I have never belonged to the growing group of American admirers of Mr. Waugh, even as a satirist. I have not read all his books, only "Decline and Fall" and "Put Out More Flags," both of which, because I am not very sensible of the virtues threatened by the objects of Mr. Waugh's satire and because I cannot share Mr. Waugh's sorrow for the fate of the prodigal sons of England's stately homes, bored me rather more than they enlightened me. Even so small a taste of Mr. Waugh's previous work prepared me for his religious solution to be, at best, a counsel of despair, and at worst, what it turned out to be: an effort to put God on the side of the dying upper classes.

For it is the other noteworthy point about Mr. Waugh's Catholicism, in addition to the uneasiness with which it lives in his sophisticated world, that it is the property of a small and embattled but highly privileged class. The Marchmains of "Brideshead Revisited" are wonderfully rich as well as beautiful: Brideshead itself is a kind of architectural object lesson in the conspicuous consumption of the best that England has had to offer for several centuries. And between this Catholic aristocracy and any other English aristocracy Mr. Waugh makes no distinction except the distinction of religion. But whatever the religion of its owner, Brideshead

could not have been built on very solid ground or there would perhaps not have had to be a Second World War in which it degenerated into a billet, and one wonders why Mr. Waugh should hope that faith will be able to restore a class that faith has not succeeded in even holding together. By ignoring the political and economic realities that underlie the dissolution of the Marchmains and blaming their tragedy solely on Lady Marchmain's piety, Mr. Waugh tempts us to indict all the evils of life in the name of piety—an amusing position for a proselytizer of religion to work himself into.

DIANA TRILLING

Mary Petty Presents—

THIS PRETTY PACE. Drawings by Mary Petty with a Preface by James Thurber. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.50.

SHAKESPEARE gave Mary Petty a plug in "Macbeth," SV:5: that is, "Creeps in this petty pace from day to day"; and Miss Petty graciously returns the compliment by using his phrase "This Petty Pace" as title for her book of creeps. This volume is not so much a collection of brilliantly captioned drawings as an anthology of compressed novels, a chronicle of the key moments in the lives of many grasshoppers. Writers spend years struggling to convey the background, character, hopes, heartbreaks, follies that Miss Petty reproduces in one drawing and one sentence. Her peculiar appeal is not limited to the eye, nor does she attempt to stun by a sharp line, but her effects are fictional in the sense that they release reading associations in the mind that continue long after the picture itself is forgotten. In this respect as in many others Miss Petty is not in the slightest degree like Daumier or Hogarth. Hers is a four-walled world, a one-class world, a one-street world, and she never ventures into politics, morals, or even life. Her characters are those of a Wodehouse musical comedy, and since their follies are across the footlights from us, her recording of them does not illumine our own follies, as satire properly does; it gives us the Christian pleasure of laughing wholeheartedly at clowns instead of at each other, and gratifies us above all by not requiring us to laugh at ourselves.

As a matter of fact, there is no reason why this book could not be used as the base for a musical comedy, with each picture taken as a song cue and the casting straight from the drawings. Miss Petty might hire one of those little men around the corner who take in writing to stitch up some words between her captions, get Hammerstein, Agnes de Mille, and six screaming agents, and the show is on. There might be difficulty in casting the many varieties of dowagers, for the Du Barry and Elizabeth Arden salons have scoured the country of dowagers, alas, and those left, like Sophie Tucker, who might look the part, prefer having hearts of gold to playing the monstrous lady Neros of Miss Petty's world. There is the majestic raddle-faced old fiend, for instance, ordering over the telephone with smelling salts in hand "a box of old-fashioned wooden matches that you can strike on the seat of your pants." We hear her again at the dining-table directing the old servant, "Here, Pompey, take these meat balls back to the kitchen and tell Lola to step them up with a little shooting sherry." These are the Hampton females, a peculiar breed one hears on Long Island South

Shore trains baying baritone trivia at each other down the coach. It would be impossible for the Petty dowagers to have a vocal range above bass clef. The Petty ingenues squeal, and the Petty men snort, whiffle, or harrumph. Ladies and gentlemen alike are complacently confident that whatever is the matter with them physically or mentally should be the matter with all the right people. They are proud of their bony backs, their buck teeth, their wattles, their mighty bosoms or scrawny chests for the wholly satisfactory reason that they are theirs and therefore irreproachable. Their moments of doubt are rare, and on these Miss Petty pounces. A masculine Petty goon is shown having his complexes stroked by an analyst. He has evidently been keeping to his room lest his split personality should open up some day in a crowded ballroom, for the doctor exhorts him to "get out and mingle with other schizophrenes." There is the poor girl whose mama has arranged for a portrait sitting, and who is arrested as she leaps stark naked to the platform by the artist's cry, "Dear no, Miss Mayberry, just the head." There is the awful moment in the aging only son's life when Mother, stabbing her needle into the hideous doily that has been her lifework, stabs Son simultaneously with these words, "Rubbish. Lots of children are unwanted. Your father and I didn't want *you*." One almost senses Son's stricken eyes moving to the Mater's velvet neckbow, tempted, as no doubt Fay, the maid, has often been, by its strangling possibilities. There is the frightful moment in one beldame's life when the ancient bachelor friend, maddened by an extra thimble of brandy and the elusive whiff of camphor in her pompadour, the beast brought out by the froufrou of her solid iron petticoats, wolfs a kiss from her left eyebrow. "Peabody, are you completely mad?" the aghast lady cries out. Tomorrow, you may be sure, the doors will be closed to the venerable bounder. Madame will take to her bed and Peabody himself will take to the analyst.

There is the poignant breakfast scene between smug wife and startled husband reading his mail. "I'd be interested to know just who offered to donate a pint of *my* blood." The veins of all the Petty people would not yield a full pint of anything more than a dilution of digitalis, medicinal sherry, and Saratoga water, but Miss Petty is like the maiden at the square piano who, her fiancé says, is "the only one I know who gets the meat out of Humperdinck." Miss Petty gets the meat even out of skeletons.

DAWN POWELL

Italy and the Church

ITALY AND THE COMING WORLD. By Luigi Sturzo. Roy Publishers. \$3.

THE importance of the role played at present in Europe by the Catholic parties does not have to be stressed. The situation might have interesting developments, especially in Italy, where the government is now in Catholic hands. After the collapse of the Italian state in 1943, the only organized structure left in Italy was that of the Catholic church. And in Italy this structure has a very visible and commanding prime motor—the Vatican. In France the situation is different, as is exemplified by the resistance to Catholic claims in the educational field and by the very prudence of the Catholic hier-

archies. In Italy the Fascist law which introduced religious indoctrination in state schools is still being enforced; the Fascist Concordat of 1919 is still in effect; publications considered offensive to the church are being suppressed by the government; and the ex-Catholic priest and eminent scholar, Ernesto Buonaiuti, is still prevented from resuming his teaching at the University of Rome on the basis of an article of the Concordat which had been conceived precisely for this purpose.

Luigi Sturzo might or might not support this state of affairs in all its implications. His personal convictions as an anti-Fascist, and as a Catholic priest who thinks that a certain amount of civil liberty and democracy is more beneficial to his church than arbitrary state rule, are above suspicion. This book of his, however, leaves many doubts as to the exact nature of his liberalism.

To start with, one notices a certain casualness in Don Sturzo's attitude toward truth and falsehood. One example can be found in the paragraph that concludes his account of the Fascist Concordat. Was it good or was it bad for the church to deal with fascism? Don Sturzo's answer is that the question is pointless because, "at best one could only say that Pius XI was prudent or imprudent. The two assertions cancel each other." This is indeed a fine point of logic—after which Don Sturzo goes on defending the Concordat.

A second example: In 1923 the Italian Catholic Party was disbanded on orders from the Vatican. In polemics with Gaetano Salvemini on this point, Don Sturzo has never been able to prove that Salvemini's facts were wrong. In this book, however, he reduces the issue to the question of whether, in 1923, he went to Montecassino for a rest or on orders from his superiors—which has never been the point. The point is rather the fundamental one of whether or not a Catholic party is, in Italy, at the mercy of orders from the Vatican. By not facing the issue Don Sturzo simply shows that it is indeed a dark one.

On this as on other burning questions, such as Vatican intervention in Spain, Don Sturzo would like to let bygones be bygones and see a fresh start. The fresh start should consist of a just peace; a wise amount of democracy for Italy; the question of monarchy versus republic, to be decided in perfect freedom, without even Don Sturzo himself saying clearly where he stands; the abandonment of the principle of separation between church and state; and all kinds of moderate reforms, including an agrarian reform that should not "impair or upset the structure of landed property" (this would seem quite a feat). The whole structure should rest on a principle called "the ontological and ethical unification in God." And certainly Don Sturzo does not mean this unification to take place in any vague or reprehensibly theistic sense.

In 1848 a very honest and very "liberal" Italian priest who was also a very bad philosopher, Antonio Rosmini, made a desperate attempt to resolve the antagonism between the church and modern times. He drafted a constitution for Italy. Article 36 of this constitution said: "The press is free. The church keeps the right of censorship on it." And Article 38 said: "Freedom of education is guaranteed." To this the pious Rosmini added the comment: "But truth has to be taught, not error. And the only repository of truth is the church." And so on.

Rosmini's constitution was immediately subjected to a ruthless attack by the Jesuits. Rosmini had surrendered on principle; Rosmini must perish. And Rosmini was condemned.

More modern than Rosmini, Don Sturzo knows how to keep clear of such dangers.

NICOLA CHIAROMONTE

BRIEFER COMMENT

Ideals and Hazards

IT IS A GOOD THING to state and restate the ideals of a democratic society and to measure the tasks which it confronts in a technical age. This is admirably achieved in David Bryn-Jones's new book, "Toward a Democratic New Order" (Minnesota, \$3.50), without, however, arousing the reader's sustained interest. The book is consistently on the side of the angels. It measures the dimensions of the democratic ideal accurately and is not unrealistic in analyzing the economic and international hazards which democracy faces in our technical civilization. Why, then, should it not have a more persuasive quality than it seems to possess?

Perhaps it is just a little too pious and has the effect of a sermon which is consistently opposed to sin but not fully conscious of the strength of temptation. Let one example suffice: The author is dealing with the democratic ideal of equality and seeking to champion the legitimacy of an essential equality despite the differentiation of function which the organization of even a democratic society makes necessary. "If a man does his best," he declares, "he deserves in return



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the best that society can do for him. . . . No necessary work is menial. . . . There is no inherent dignity in a white-collar job. . . . That the brain worker belongs to a superior order is a naive superstition. . . ." All very true. But it does not change the fact that some functions in society are surrounded with an aura of prestige, not to speak of privilege and power, which they may not deserve but will probably always have. Even democratic societies have various oligarchies; and their power and prestige are based on something more than "naive superstition." We cannot dispense with equality as a regulative ideal of justice; but neither can we regard the social processes which lead to the hierarchical structure of society as grounded merely in superstition. REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Armies and Modern War

HAD THE PUBLISHERS of "Arms and Policy," by Hoffman Nickerson (Putnam's, \$3.50), seen fit to edit it with close attention, it might have been received with the respect which it deserves but probably will not get. The objectionable material consists largely of gratuitous asides and passing comments, apparently representing Mr. Nickerson's political and social beliefs, which could have easily been omitted, since for the most part they have nothing to do with the main arguments of the book. Some reviewers will be so taken up with denouncing Mr. Nickerson as a reactionary that, it is to be feared, they will overlook or dismiss his very real merit as a student of military problems. For he is something quite rare in this country—a military theorist of the first rank.

The author begins by restating an old thesis of his: the origins of present-day mass warfare do not lie in industrialization but in the political and social thinking of the French Revolution with its concept of war-making as the conscripted duty of the many rather than the voluntary privilege of the few. Indeed, industrialization is slowly but steadily reducing the size of fighting armies. The bulk of any modern army is its service and maintenance force, and on the battlefield the plane-tank team has assumed a decisive striking role, relegating the foot soldier—the eloquent efforts of Pentagon publicists notwithstanding—to a secondary position.

The main body of the book is taken up with a critical analysis of the campaigns of the war up to about September, 1944. Two points may be cited by way of illustration. The Nazis' failure to invade England after Dunkirk was no staff blunder: had they made the attempt, the ensuing repulse would have taken on the proportions of a "massacre." Close support proved to be the most effective employment of the air arm. Strategic bombing—which Mr. Nickerson somewhat brutally calls "baby-killing"—did not, as we are beginning to discover, produce the results which its supporters claimed it would, either in industrial destruction or terrorism. The book contains only a few remarks on the atomic bomb, and they were evidently written in haste, but this development is plainly the concern of the politician and the scientist rather than the soldier.

The book concludes with a survey of two post-war questions. The author is opposed to the acquisition of Pacific bases because they can never really be made defensible, and by so extending itself the country is weakening, not strengthening, its military position. Still less can be said for compulsory military training in an era when, more than ever

before, the mass conscript army seems to have outlived its usefulness. These theories will not pass unchallenged, but they are on the whole supported by sound reasoning, worthy of examination.

HARVEY S. FORD

Proof Positive

HISTORIES OF ART AND LITERATURE are the stepchildren of the historical sciences because their subjects cannot be dealt with adequately without that quality called taste, and taste does not necessarily belong to the scholar's scale of virtues. This unfortunate state of affairs is already well known, and there was no need for Victor Lange to prove the point.

Nevertheless, he has proved it in almost exemplary fashion in his volume, "Modern German Literature, 1870-1940" (Cornell, \$2.50). If anyone wishes to know how not to write a history of literature he has only to be given this book. Every author, no matter how obscure, is mentioned at least once, and no distinctions whatever are made. Third-grade writers like Raabe are set side by side with first-rate poets like Stifter. The twentieth century, for which judgments are not yet established, fares even worse. To give one single instance taken at random: "The poetry of the later Rilke, of Binding and Carossa, of Rudolf Borchardt and Rudolf Alexander Schröder, of Oskar Lörke and Agnes Miegel, and the singularly impressive epic poems of Albrecht Schäffer are all indicative of a palpable shift from expressionist abandon to the austerity of a disciplined idiom." The point is that Binding, Lörke, and Agnes Miegel are indicative of nothing except very mediocre poetry; that the others may be "indicative" but of widely differing trends; and that only Borchardt and Schröder have anything in common at all.

The only proof that this book was written by a real person and is not a filing system which through some magic has got into print lies in occasional omissions—of Mörike and Kleist in the first part, of Hans Blüher and the last beautiful novel-fragment of Hofmannsthal ("Andreas") in the second. But for these omissions one feels rather grateful.

There would not be much sense in reviewing such a book if it were not for the, let us hope, imaginary danger that it should become a textbook. It would cause the intelligent student to shy away from German literature, while it might give to the more feeble-minded a terrific arsenal of cheap catchwords which have not the slightest relation to the respective authors and their work.

HANNAH ARENDT

Reply to Hayek

"ROAD TO REACTION" by Herman Finer (Little, Brown, \$2) is a long, angry review of Hayek's "Road to Serfdom." It would have been a better book had it been less angry; the frequent use of the argument *ad hominem* is no credit to its author. It is a sad commentary on the lack of communication between social scientists of different disciplines: both Hayek and Finer write with a strong prejudice in favor of their own intellectual interests. Hayek, the economist, loves the private administration of business and the working of economic competition; Finer, the political scientist, loves public administration and the working of political competition. Both are blind to the defects of their loves.

It is characteristic of Hayek that he gives scant attention to the scourge of economic competition—unemployment. It is characteristic of Finer that he gives no attention whatever to the scourge of political competition—war. If Hayek is blind to the blood on the hands of Standard Oil, Finer is even blinder to the blood on the hands of the national state.

Neither Hayek nor Finer, it seems to this reviewer, has come to grips with the real problem of the place of competition in social life. Hayek is unduly naive about the benevolence of the free market as an economic regulator, and does not adequately appreciate the ease with which beneficent competition slips into maleficent deflation. Finer, on the other hand, is equally naive about the universal benevolence of parliamentary democracy and the competition of parties, and does not see that, like economic competition, this benevolence operates only within limits, and that under adverse conditions the will of the majority—as Plato saw—can lead to tyranny. The argument of the collectivists against the free market—that it gives the rich too many "dollar votes" and the poor too few, and so distorts the structure of demand away from the structure of "need"—can also be applied to parliamentarianism: the votes of a majority who care little about a measure may override the votes of the minority who care a great deal. This does not mean that we should abolish either the free market or parliaments; it does mean that both are successful only within limits. We need much hard thinking and study to find what these limits are and how to secure them. Mr. Finer would have made a greater contribution to this task if he had written less hastily, with less heat, and with better editing.

K. E. BOULDING

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Art

CLEMENT
GREENBERG

AS WE all know from the newspapers, two hundred important paintings by masters ranging in time from Giotto to Daumier have been brought to this country from damaged or destroyed museums in Germany by the United States government for safekeeping in the storage rooms of the National Gallery at Washington. They will be returned to Germany when "definitely established as being of bona fide German ownership . . . and when conditions there warrant." Meanwhile, "it is not contemplated that any of these works of art will be exhibited to the public at present."

I have seen the list of the pictures involved in this transaction, and the number of great masters and the quantity in which they are represented take my breath away: four Altdorfers, four Baldung-Grüns, five Botticellis, three Bronzinos, three Cranachs, two Charlins, five Dürers, four Elsheimers, three Guardis, six Halses, three Holbeins (including the portrait of Giesze), two Mantegnas, three Masaccios, three Memlings, two Giovanni di Paolos, two Pousins, two Raphaels, fifteen Rembrandts, six Rubenses, two Sassettas, three Signorellis, two Steens, two Ter Borchs, three Tiepolos, two Tintoretts, five Titians, five Van der Weydens, five (!) Van Eycks, two Van Leydens, two Velasquezes, two Vermeers, two Andrea del Verrochios, three Watteaus—not to mention single examples by Angelico, Bosch, Caravaggio, Carpaccio, Correggio, di Cosimo, Giorgione, Hobbema, the Lippis, Lorrain, Patinir, Ruysdael, Schongauer, Seghers, Cosimo Tura, Manet, and still others.

That these works should come to this country and remain unseen is of a piece with everything else that distinguishes an age which, even when it wants to, can no more tell the difference between man as an end and man as a means than it can tell the difference between things as ends and things as means.

These pictures are means, let there be no mistake about that—means to the gratification of man. When they are removed from sight their purpose is violated. And to handle them at the same time with such care (air-conditioned storage) is to regard them in effect as objects solely of great material value, which is to pervert their function. The money value the pictures represent be-

comes more important and more of an end than the delight they would afford countless people in this country who will never be able to travel to see them in Europe.

Naturally, it would cost money to put the pictures on public exhibition—and that is a consideration; especially since it would be better to show them all at once than piecemeal, and still better to send them around the country. But if money is all that stands in the way, a collection could be taken up; or perhaps some rich benefactor of the arts would come forward to donate the costs. At any rate they ought to be shown; if they come and go without being seen by the American public it will amount to a scandal.

Films

JAMES
AGEE

THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S," like "Going My Way," is distinguished for leisure and spaciousness, for delight in character and atmosphere, for its use of scenes which are inserted not to advance the story but for their own intrinsic charm. One such set-piece—in which primary-school children rehearse a Christmas play—is almost magically deft and pretty; and the picture is full of shrewd and pleasant flashes. It is also fascinating to watch as a talented, desperate effort to repeat the unrepeatable. But on the whole it is an unhappy film. Bing Crosby's priest, who was so excellent in the earlier picture, at times looks just bored, cold, and sly, as if he knew that this sort of thing had gone on too long for the good of anybody's soul, his own first of all. Ingrid Bergman replaces Barry Fitzgerald and, for my money, cannot compete with him in sex appeal, though she has and uses a lot too much to play a Mother Superior, comes painfully close to twittering her eyes in scenes with Crosby, and in general, I grieve to say, justifies a recent piece of radio promotion which rather startlingly describes a nun: "Ingrid Bergman has never been lovelier, hubbahubbahubba."

I find very objectionable the movies' increasing recognition of the romantic-commercial values of celibacy. I like hardly better a little boxing lesson in which Mother Bergman shows one of the schoolboys how not to lead with the other cheek. I am just plain horrified by the way in which the sisters hound an old nabob into beneficence. And though I was amused both by a kitten which got

fouled up in Fr. Crosby's famous straw hat, and by a mongrel which got a fit of yawns while Henry Travers was trying to pray, I think that too much of a good thing is more than enough. The trouble is, the whole picture is more than enough, and anyone of Leo McCarey's talent would have been wise to use the talent on something entirely new instead. But it looks as if Father O'Malley, like Andy Hardy, is set to go on and on. In case there is any doubt about a subject, I suggest that the priest become a fixer, next time, for the Little Brothers of St. Dismas—if only in order that he may sing the theme song (which I will gladly furnish on request) "Take It on the Lam of God."

For what seems at least half of the dogged, devoted length of "They Were Expendable" all you have to watch is men getting on or off PT boats, and other men watching them do so. But this is made so beautiful and so real that I could not feel one foot of the film was wasted. The rest of the time the picture is showing nothing much newer, with no particular depth of feeling, much less idea; but, again, the whole thing is so beautifully directed and photographed, in such an abundance of vigorous open air and good raw sunlight, that I thoroughly enjoyed and admired it. Visually, and in detail, and in nearly everything he does with people, I think it is John Ford's finest movie. Another man who evidently learned a tremendous amount through the war is Robert Montgomery, whose sober, light, sure performance is, so far as I can remember, the one perfection to turn up in movies during the year.

"A Walk in the Sun" is often very alive and likable, thanks to several of its players, particularly Herbert Rudley, Richard Conti, Lloyd Bridges, and Dana Andrews. The gradual increase of daylight which opens it is atmospherically and technically wonderful; you can seldom get your eyes hurt, as I did here, by the manipulation, against dark contexts, of a little bit of cloudy light on a screen. In motion and shooting, much of the film is worked out with very unusual vitality and care—much of which, unfortunately, is related more nearly to ballet than to warfare. But mainly, I think, it is an embarrassing movie. The dialogue seems as unreal as it is expert. Most of the characters—as distinct from the men who play them—are as unreal and literary as the dialogue. The aesthetic and literary and pseudo-democratic preoccupations are so strong that at times all sense of plain reality drops

out of the picture. At the end, for instance, with their farmhouse captured, various featured players are shown completing the gags which tag their characters—chomping an apple, notching a rifle-stock, and so on—while, so far as the camera lets you know, their wounded comrades are still writhing unattended in the dooryard.

Music

B. H.
HAGGIN

THE Budapest Quartet has been playing Schubert and Brahms at the concerts of the New Friends of Music and repeating its Beethoven cycle at the Y. M. H. A. There can be no doubt of the loss to the quartet through Alexander Schneider's departure. One hears it in the altered sound of the entire group, in which the robust and dark-toned viola and cello are less well balanced by the two delicate and light-toned violins than they used to be when they were matched by at least one of the violins. And one hears it in Ortenberg's own playing, which lacks the vitality and style that Schneider's had. And yet, even with these losses, the performances are unique, unapproached by any others. One must, in fact, say of them what one says of Toscanini's—that they are not just great performances, or the greatest one has heard, but that in their province they are something on a different level of functioning from the best of other good performers and musicians, a product of a different order of powers of musical insight and execution.

One must say this even though the performances are uneven these days—possibly as a result of fatigue and staleness from too much playing the last few years. The finale of Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" Quartet at the New Friends kept building up to big moments that were so expansive in sonority and pace as to break the wonderful continuity of momentum the movement used to have. And some of the Beethoven quartets at the Y. M. H. A. have been dry and scratchy in sound. But at the same concert where the Opus 95 was dry and scratchy the Opus 135 had all the beauty of sound of the group's playing at its best. And though the sound in Opus 95 was scratchy and dry one heard in the performance the operation of that different order of powers of musical insight and ensemble execution.

Schneider meanwhile continues to lead

the Albeneri Trio, which also has been playing Brahms and Schubert at the New Friends and all of Beethoven's trios at the Y. M. H. A. And these have not been performances by a well-matched group of three players of equal capacities, but instead performances in which the violinist's beautiful use of his instrument and distinguished musical style have stood out sharply against the coarse playing of the cellist, the pallid, characterless sounds from the piano. I am anything but unaware of the particular talent it took to play the piano's great opening statement in the slow movement of Beethoven's Opus 97 so that its greatness was made almost completely unnoticeable; but it is a talent I do not value.

I am aware also that this gray, mouse-like piano-playing is what many listeners and critics—from long hearing of it—consider proper in ensemble performance (just as long hearing of hysterical falsification of Tchaikovsky's music has given them the idea that this is the proper way of treating that music.) My own idea of what is proper in ensemble performance is playing that is pianistically beautiful and musically alive—the playing of a Rupp, a Balsam, a Harry Kaufman. And the New Friends audience heard an outstanding example of it when Webster Aitken played with a group assembled in place of the originally scheduled Budapest Quartet. I chose to listen to the concert as broadcast by WQXR; and careless microphone placement made the strings sound right in the room and the piano a mile away when it was not blanketed completely; but when it could be heard there was no mistaking the beautiful sound of Aitken's playing and the exciting continuity of rhythmic flow and phraseological outline that he created for the other players. Really—to quote Virgil Thomson's remark after an Aitken recital—it was not the sort of playing you hear every year; certainly it wasn't the sort of playing the New Friends audience had heard recently; and I hope it appreciated it when it heard it this time. If it did it may be interested in Aitken's performance of Schubert's G major Sonata at his Town Hall recital early in February, when he will also play Mozart's wonderful Rondo K. 511, Bach's Toccata in E minor, Stravinsky's Sonata, Debussy's "Estampes," and a new piece by Messiaen.

WQXR not only transmitted the performance of Schubert's "Forellen" Quintet badly balanced but cut it off in the middle of the finale; and it did the same thing with the Albeneri Trio's performance of Schubert's Trio Opus 100.

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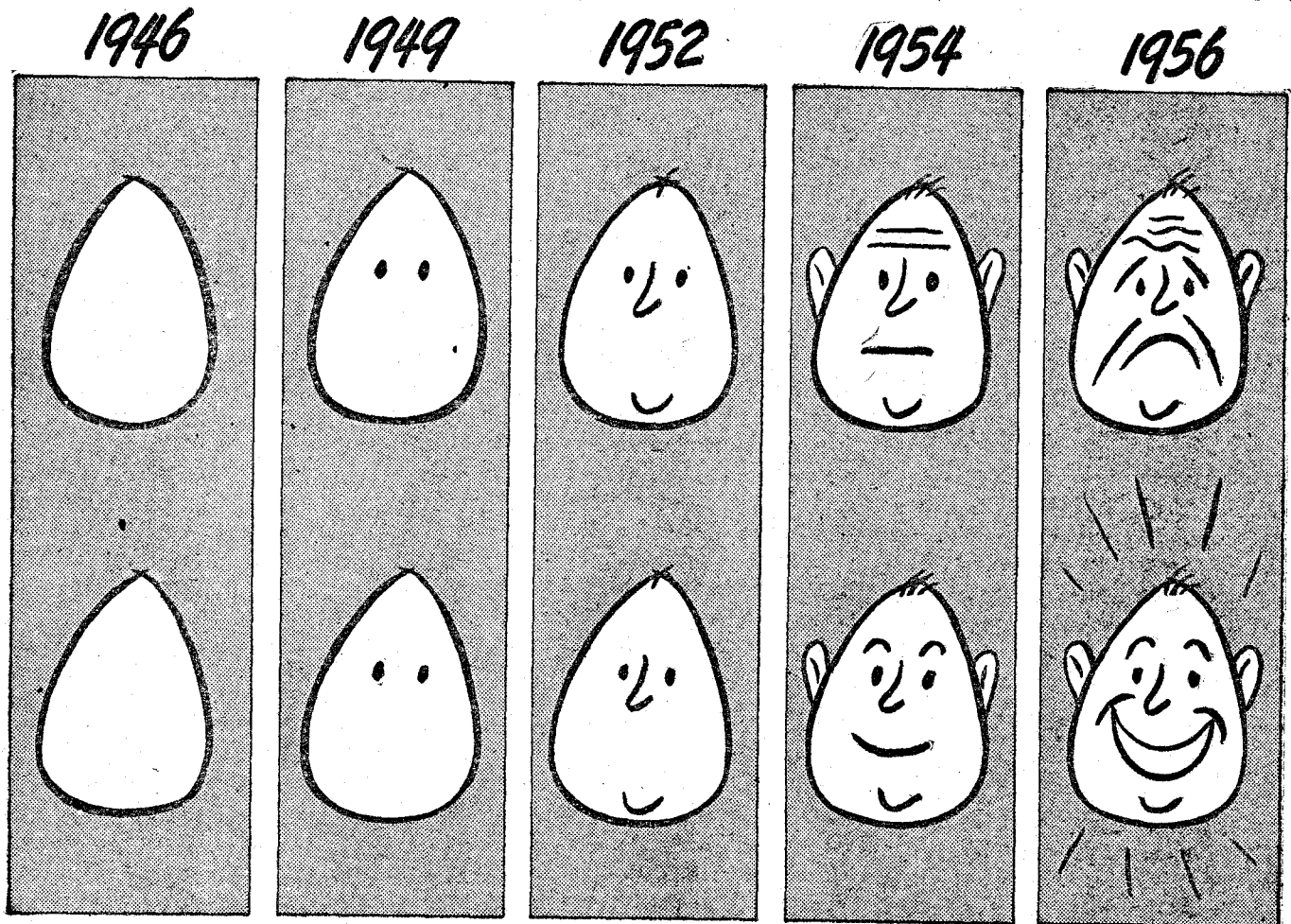
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Letters to the Editors

Friends of France

Dear Sirs: Seeing the message in your December 22 issue listing agencies which collect clothing for war victims, I want to let your readers know that the needs of the French people are not forgotten, and that there is definitely a way for American friends to help them in this sixth year of their suffering from the war.

As a member agency of the National War Fund, American Relief for France has observed the regulations of the President's War Relief Control Board in not making public appeals for "gifts in kind" during the fund-raising campaigns of the War Fund—but such gifts are received, sorted, packed, and shipped to France the year round; and all contributions of clothing are welcomed at the American Relief for France Warehouse, 15 East 24th Street.

FLORENCE GILLIAM,

Executive Director of Public Relations,
American Relief for France
New York, December 21

Notes on Bolivia

Dear Sirs: In his article entitled *Terror in Bolivia* in your issue of November 17, Mr. Arze discloses that he is an exile, that he is head of the P. I. R., and that the P. I. R. asked the Bolivian President to include them in the government, and they were not included. In other words, Arze, who did not participate in the people's revolution that put Villarroel in office, wanted to participate in the government. He was not acceptable; so he is in the United States or Chile (he drifts back and forth), calling the government bad names. He calls them Nazis or fascists.

On the opposite side of the picture, Patiño, Hochschild, and Aramayo—the three big mine owners—are also political exiles. They are in the United States and Argentina calling the Bolivian government equally ugly names. But since these gentlemen are well known to be reactionaries, they are calling the Bolivian government Communists.

Thus we have Arze calling them fascists and reactionaries, and the mine owners calling them communistic. I think you will find the government to be a little left of center. I think you will also find the wage scale to have increased considerably due to government

decrees, and social-security benefits to have been increased likewise.

Enrique Camacho, president of the Bolivian Development Corporation, is a Bolivian army officer without much business experience. He is an ideal man for president of the Bolivian Development Corporation. The American manager will run it, and Camacho is honest and patriotic. What more could you want?

Incidentally, Bolivia had a free election. The M. N. R. won; the P. I. R. lost. The President has had to do business therefore with the majority party in Congress. Otherwise, he would not be democratic.

SPROESSER WYNN,

Honorary Bolivian Consul
Fort Worth, Tex., December 7

AMG Rebuttal

Dear Sirs: The article AMG—Innocents Abroad has attracted my attention in the October 6 issue of *The Nation*—a scarce article of literary fare in the ETO.

I am one of those innocents recently returned from nineteen months overseas service in Military Government. I commanded MG teams in the field, served on Corps and Division MG staffs, and was a member of a team which assumed control over one of the first large cities to be taken in Germany. Altogether I spent twenty-two months in Military Government.

First, let me say that there is some truth in Mr. Padover's article; unfortunately, there is not enough. I am sure that his contact with Military Government was far more limited than he implies, and in any event, his presentation of conditions presumably prevailing in Aachen in November, 1944, as current in the whole American zone in October, 1945, is not good journalism.

Contrary to Mr. Padover's first contention, Military Government *was* organized to rule Germany in peace time. AMGOT was planned in advance for Italy, and as a result of the lessons learned (and mistakes made) there, the program was reorganized for Germany. Special classes were begun in the spring of 1943 in leading universities for those selected to participate in the MG phase of the expected German occupation. This training was concerned with German customs, language, politics, the Nazi Party—background material. It did not concern itself with long-range pol-

icy as there was and apparently still is none. This was no fault of MG. Policy is "higher-level stuff," not to be determined, presumably, by local MG representatives. We, the underlings, were painfully aware of this situation.

I think that any MG officer will bear me out in saying that the first essential in any change in Military Government in Germany is a clear-cut policy not subject to daily amendment. Personally, I believe that most MG officers have done an excellent job while laboring under unexpected and sometimes nearly insurmountable difficulties.

Regarding the retention of Nazis in power, I must agree that it was done *at first*. But let's review what happened. It had been early recognized that the bulk of the civil service in less important, lesser-paying jobs was filled with people who had been admitted to the party on a join-or-else basis. Within certain limits, the decision as to whether a man was only a nominal Nazi and could be retained was discretionary with the local MG officer.

It soon became apparent that leaving the question of political reliability of office-holders up to individual MG officers was unworkable administratively. On April 14, 1945, the 12th Army Group issued its famous directive stating in black and white who was to be removed and who could be hired. A house-cleaning then commenced, and when the deadline, July 31, was past, the American zone was pretty clean.

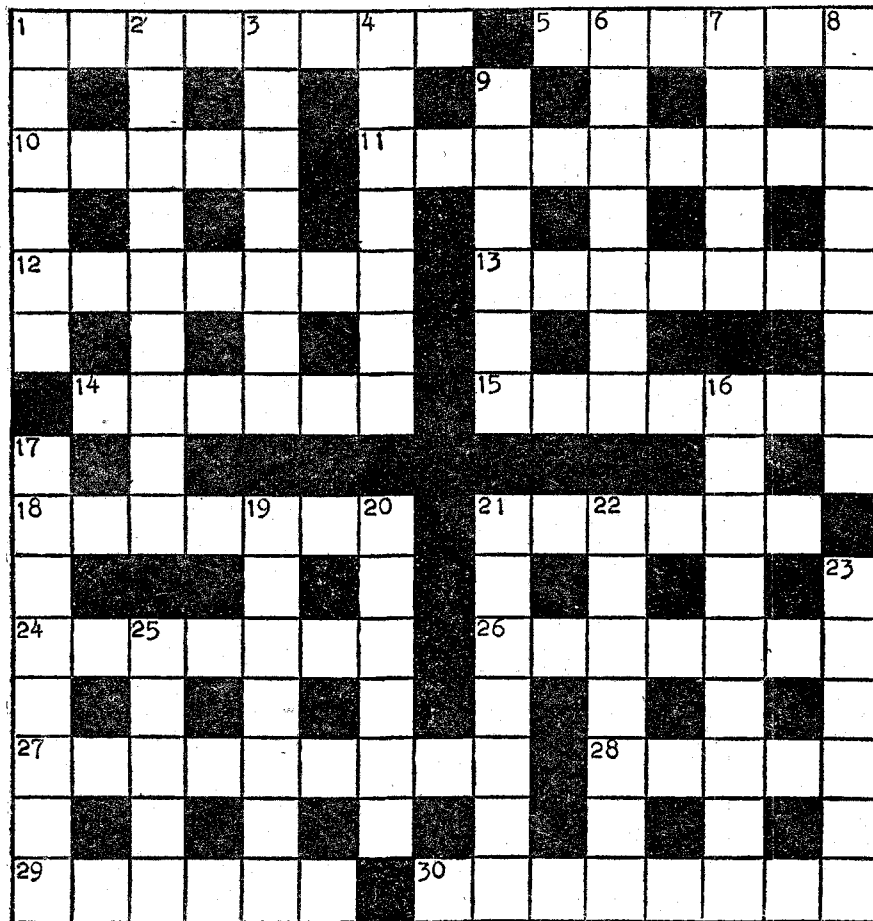
Perhaps the worst untruth perpetrated by Mr. Padover was the assertion that MG "lacked a political-intelligence department," which he rightly considers "a most vital instrument of government." Such a statement is strong indication to anyone familiar with MG that Mr. Padover is not the best authority on its operation.

There is a certain type of "liberal" who believes that anyone unsympathetic to Russia must of necessity be a fascist. I do not know whether Mr. Padover falls into that category, but as for the "anti-reds" among MG officers, who thought that Nazis were "just a political party, something like the Republicans and Democrats at home," there may be some so naive. I never met any.

Let's put it this way: I myself have been sympathetic toward Russia for many years. I still am. But I do not believe that the war was fought to make

Crossword Puzzle No. 142

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

- 1 This British war measure was so frightening at first that even burglars stayed at home
- 5 No ordinary horse, he: if more than one rode him he accommodat- ingly grew in length
- 10 American painter, and illustrator of Shakespeare (1852-1911)
- 11 "What economy is it to go to bed to save candle light," he asked, "if the result be twins?"
- 12 Reward with sixpence, in Shakes- peare's day
- 13 Town of Oklahoma
- 14 Snoop around an industrious worker in the butler's room
- 15 Place just outside New York
- 18 Lake in Campania, called by the poets "the entrance to the infernal regions"
- 21 Co-stars with Palamon in the first of the *Canterbury Tales*
- 24 How far can you go into a forest?
- 26 Having made a will—so much of it being landed property, you know
- 27 Dog which used to love having a coach run over him
- 28 Not recognized that gears were en- gaged
- 29 To peck (añag.)
- 30 Was in supreme command in Greek waters

DOWN

- 1 Is only skin deep—but then it's only the skin you see
- 2 A surprising occurrence in war

- 3 Town of Florida, so called because of the number of bones found upon the reef (two words, 3 & 4)
- 4 Unearthly, but not necessarily heavenly
- 6 Suddenly
- 7 As our Spanish friend here sees it, his French colleague lacks go
- 8 Break up
- 9 Proverbial state of crowned heads
- 16 Might make Ned recant
- 17 "Found drowned," perhaps; fin- ished, anyway (two words, 6 & 2)
- 19 Famous London prison
- 20 Enough to put a golfer off his putt
- 21 Father of Proteus, in Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*
- 22 I will be found in an old stronghold in Spain
- 23 Charlie McCarthy's wire-puller
- 25 Shrub of the ash, jasmine and olive family

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 141

ACROSS:—1 AD LIB; 4 ORC; 6 HERON; 9 SEVENTY; 10 FRANTIC; 11 MARMOT; 13 BEATRICE; 15 MILLERS; 16 IN DEBT; 17 SLUM; 19 EARTHEN; 21 PORT; 23 NEW INN; 25 SIBERIA; 27 ALISTAIR; 28 CRAFTS; 31 SHIKARI; 32 CLEARED; 33 MUGGY; 34 GAT; 35 STORM.

DOWN:—1 ASSAM; 2 LEVERED; 3 BUN- COMBE; 4 ONYX; 5 COFFEE; 6 HEARTS; 7 RETRIAL; 8 NACRE; 12 TITANIA; 13 BLATHER; 14 ARSENIC; 16 IMP; 18 MAN; 20 NEARNESS; 22 RAILING; 24 INFERNO; 25 STEADY; 26 BITING; 27 ADSUM; 29 SODOM; 30 SCOT.

the world safe for communism. In MG we unhappily realized that our own country did not know quite what it wanted to do with Germany, while the Russians apparently did. However, we did believe that some form of democ- racy was our objective, and we had no intention of playing into the hands of Russian agents busily engaged in re- establishing German communism by turning civilian administration over to the pro-Russian elements. Personally, it was simply a question of ordinary loy- alty to my own country outweighing sympathy toward Russia. As for our classifying "anti-fascists, Social Demo- crats . . . as nothing but reds; and reds are worse than Nazis," nonsense!

In conclusion, too many people still differentiate sharply between Nazis and other Germans. We in Military Govern- ment concluded from experience that after eliminating the real Nazi hierarchy, the distinction between the rest of the Nazis and the German people was somewhat hollow. The assumption that the bulk of the German people are peace-loving democrats whose republic was stolen by a Nazi minority is at odds with the facts, to put it conservatively.

No doubt most Americans expected MG to establish a democratic govern- ment in Germany, a government run by people who believe that the war was wrong and that Germans are no differ- ent from anybody else—in other words, a government run by people much like ourselves. That is the trouble. There are, practically speaking, no such Germans.

FORMER MG OFFICER

Manhattan Beach, Cal., December 1

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